Standard Bearer, 1st Battalion, Standarte Nr. 3

Waffen-SS

Its Uniforms, Insignia and Equipment 1938-1945

D. S. V. FOSTEN
&
R. J. MARRION

ALMARK
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Introduction

MUCH has been written about the Waffen-SS, the part it played in the short and violent history of the Third Reich, and in more recent years about its uniforms and badges as they were designed and issued by the RZM (Reichszeugmeisterei der N.S.D.A.P.). Nevertheless the writers are of the opinion that, even with this wealth of precisely detailed information now freely available there is still a need for an easy reference work for students of German uniforms, concentrating more on what was worn as opposed to what was prescribed, and setting this information out in such a way as to make it simple to trace the identity of a particular unit, its badges and specialised items of dress.

The study of thousands of photographs in the Imperial War Museum, private collections, U.S. Army sources and the records of resistance movements reveals that even within the Waffen-SS, always cast in the role of blind obedience to orders, the rule books and regulations were cast aside when in the field.

Thanks are due to David Nash and Laurence Milner of the Imperial War Museum for their patience and assistance in the library, photographic section and the wardrobe rooms, and to Norman Plaskett for photographing certain items. Theodor Hartmann gave us much of his very valuable time solving contentious issues and checking the text, and special mention must be made of Colonel J. Elting, U.S. Army (Rtd), who kindly opened several avenues of research in the U.S.A.

Where certain badges, cuff titles, etc, have been checked against photographic evidence they are quoted without comment but in certain cases, where facts have not been proved, the matter is clearly indicated as still open to doubt. It is clear that many items such as divisional, regimental and national legion collar patches and cuff titles although designed and manufactured under the direction of the RZM in practice never reached the front line troops concerned.

David Littlejohn kindly assisted in various ways in this revised edition.

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Standarte (Regiment) No 1 of the pre-war SS-VT was named 'Deutschland'. Here an honour guard of the regiment, in black parade dress, presents arms for British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain at Munich on October 1, 1938. Note the regimental number adjacent to the runes in the collar patch. White gloves were often worn by guards and sentries in this order of dress as shown here. (Keystone).

FRONT COVER: The standard bearer of the 1st Battalion of Standarte No 3 'Der Fuhrer' in parade dress and overcoat, wearing the prescribed steel gorget for this duty. His rank is Hauptscharführer. The small illustration shows the woven form of the SS arm badge.

BACK COVER: Men of Standarte No 2 'Germania' in France during the May 1940 offensive when the regiment was equipped and organised as motorised infantry.

Part 1: Establishment, Organisation, and Divisions

THE history of the Waffen-SS can be said to begin with the raising of the SS-Stabswache (Headquarters Security Guard) in Berlin in March 1933. This small detachment of armed Nazi Party troopers became the Führer's personal bodyguard and was subsequently expanded to become the SS-Verfügungstruppen and the Waffen-SS. The bodyguard unit was officially constituted and given its title, the SS-Leibstandarte 'Adolf Hitler' (SS-Lifeguard Adolf Hitler), on the National Socialist Party Day in the same year.

In the years between 1933 and 1939 the armed section of the SS was gradually expanded with units up to battalion strength appearing in the various districts of the Third Reich. These para-military troops known as 'Politische Bereitschaften' (Politically prepared troops) were the direct forerunners of the SS-Verfügungstruppen (SS-VT) (Armed Reserve Troops) and formed what was fast becoming a secondary, politically activated, army within the National Socialist State.

Defined shortly after its formation in 1934 as . . . 'A military drilled troop of the Schutz-Staffeln (SS) counting neither as Police nor as part of the Armed Forces, but which is exclusively at the disposal of the Führer, for special tasks in peace and War . . .', units of the SS-VT took part in the occupation of the Sudetenland, Austria and Czechoslovakia and so consolidated its position in the military hierarchy of Hitler's Germany.

By 1936 an SS-VT Inspectorate had been established to administer and supervise the new force which was to be paid and receive allotments according to Wehrmacht regulations. The periods of enlistment were laid down as four years for troopers, 12 years for sergeants and 25 years for officers.

The SS-VT was recruited from party members of Aryan blood and was made subject to the severe rules of other branches of the SS and increased in both its numerical strength and equipment so that, by the outbreak of the War, it comprised three infantry regiments each of which was three battalions strong. The three regiments were as follows:

(1) Standarte (Regiment) No 1 — titled 'Deutschland'
(2) Standarte (Regiment) No 2 — titled 'Germania'
(3) Standarte (Regiment) No 3 — titled 'Der Führer'

The latter regiment was raised in 1938 largely from Austrians (the

The Leibstandarte 'Adolf Hitler' form a guard of honour for the Führer in February 1938 at the ceremony commemorating the burning of the Reichstag. By this time the L.A.H. was wearing its distinctive white leather equipment, which with overcoats, was limited to the belt only. Note the cuff title 'Adolf Hitler' and the piped collar on the overcoat. Numerous SS-VT staff officers in black parade dress are seen in Hitler's entourage.

Leibstandarte [L.A.H.] had been withdrawn from the numbered series of SS-VT regiments as early as 1934 because, no doubt, Hitler had visions of keeping its 'Prætorian Guard' status). Each regiment (Standarte) comprised three battalions (Sturmbanne), each battalion four companies (Sturme), each company three platoons (Züge), each platoon four sections (Gruppen).

The L.A.H., the three SS-VT Motorised Infantry Regiments, plus ancillary Artillery, Signals, Engineer, Reconnaisance and Anti-Aircraft units took an active part in the Polish campaign.

In addition to the SS-VT, the other full-time armed SS organisations at this period were the SS 'Totenkopfverbände' (Deaths Head Detachments). These units, originally formed purely to guard the concentration camps, were also to provide cadres to safeguard the Reich against any internal civil strife which might arise in the event of Germany going to War. They were established (under Theodor Eicke) into five original

formations, titled:

(a) 'Oberbayern'
(b) 'Elbe'
(c) 'Sachsen'
(d) 'Ostfriesland'
(e) 'Brandenburg'

In 1937 these five units were re-organised as three regiments:

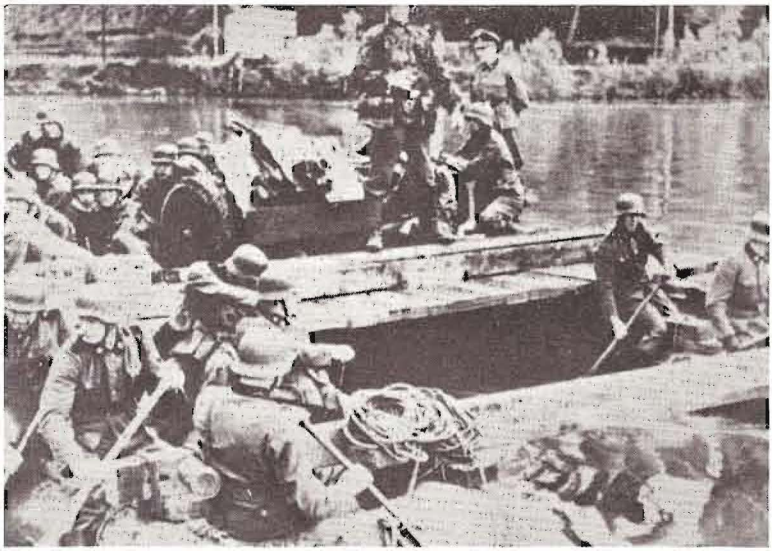
(1) 'Oberbayern'
(2) 'Brandenburg'
(3) 'Thuringen'

After the occupation of Austria a fourth regiment was raised and known as 'Ostmark'.

The 'Totenkopf' formations served with the SS-VT in the occupation of Austria, the Sudetenland, and Czechoslovakia, and were further increased in strength by 12 new regiments in 1939. Raised at this time from ethnic Germans in the Danzig area was Infantry Battalion SS-'Heimwehr Danzig'. Later its strength was augmented by an SS Totenkopf Battalion 'Götze'; it was initially used to police the Danzig area.

After the cessation of hostilities in Poland the SS-VT along with the 'Totenkopf' regiments were withdrawn for complete re-organisation. The three SS-VT regiments were expanded into a motorised division to be known as the 'Verfügungsdivision', and the L.A.H. was increased in strength to a fully motorised infantry regiment. The élite members of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd 'Totenkopf' regiments with a cadre of SS-VT and some Police reservists were formed into a fourth SS Division, the 'Totenkopf-division'.

At the same time another division, conscripted mainly from the



An infantry gun detachment of SS division 'Totenkopf' ferry their 7·5cm gun across a canal during the invasion of France and Flanders in May 1940. Note the 'death's head' collar patches and the NCO in camouflage smock (IWM-MH197).

An MG34 team of the Polizeidivision during the invasion of France in May 1940. A distinctive feature of the police units was the police escutcheon on the helmet instead of the national emblem.

'Ordnungspolizei' (the National, Rural and Local Police Forces) together with some remaining elements from the 'Totenkopf' regiments was raised and titled the 'Polizeidivision'.

Before the Western offensive, the SS-VT had therefore been reinforced and re-organised and now comprised:

(a) The Verfügungsdivision
(b) The Totenkopfdivision
(c) The Polizeidivision
(d) The SS-Leibstandarte 'Adolf Hitler'
(e) Independent 'Totenkopf' Regiments plus divisional support units and
(f) The SS Junkerschule (officers' school) 'Braunschweig'
(g) The SS Junkerschule (officers' school) 'Bad Tölz'
(h) The SS Ärtzliche Akadamie (Medical School) 'Graz'
(i) The SS Verwaltungsführerschule (Administration School)

The term 'Waffen-SS' (literally, the SS-in-arms) came into use sometime early in 1940, although the fact was not well publicised until a speech by Hitler in July 1940.

Besides the 'Totenkopf' regiments already in the field, a further eight were recruited and despatched to police the various non-German major cities occupied after the Western offensive. To provide a continuous supply of replacements for the field units, so-called Ersatzeinheiten (Reinforcement or Replacement) units were raised, and by the end of 1940 similar Ersatz units had been formed to provide reinforcements to the support formations.

In April 1940 an SS Regiment 'Nordland' was formed mainly from Danish and Norwegian sympathisers, and in June 1940 a further volunteer unit, SS Regiment 'Westland' was recruited in the Netherlands and Belgium. Later in 1940 these regiments, together with Regiment 'Germania' and the 5th SS Artillery Regiment, were grouped to form the 'Germania' Division. At the same time the Verfügungsdivision was renamed 'Deutschland', a title that caused some confusion and was almost immediately re-named 'Reich', only to be later amended to 'Das

Men of Standarte No 2 'Germania' in France in May 1940. They are wearing army pattern tunics, then on recent issue, and this probably explains the complete absence of collar patches. Collars of the two privates behind the NCO are completely plain.

Reich'. During this period of re-organisation the 'Germania' Division was re-named and became 'Wiking'. Two 'Totenkopf' Regiments (Nos 6 and 7) were re-titled SS Infantry Regiments 6 and 7 during the same period and joined with certain other support troops to become collectively known as the SS Kampfgruppe 'Nord'. The remaining 'Totenkopf' Regiments were brought into brigade formation, Regiments 8 and 10 becoming the 1st SS (Motor) Brigade, and Regiments 4 and 14, the 2nd SS (Motor) Brigade. Independent 'Totenkopf' cavalry elements were re-organised at the same time and were formed with SS cycle units and some Horse Artillery elements into the 1st and 2nd SS Cavalry Regiments.

During 1940-41 the first two NCO Leadership Schools (SS Unterführerschulen) were created at Lauernberg and Radolfzell and shortly after two SS Artillery Schools numbered I ('Gau') and II ('Beneschau') were formed.

In June 1941 at the commencement of Operation Barbarossa (the

Freikorps Danmark was one of the foreign national legions which served with the Waffen-SS. Here, at a dockside parade in 1942, the regiment parades to receive floral tributes before leaving for the Russian Front (Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp).

invasion of the Soviet Union) the Waffen-SS was formed as follows:

(1) Division SS-Leibstandarte 'Adolf Hitler'
(2) SS Division 'Das Reich'
(3) SS Division 'Totenkopf'
(4) SS Polizei Division
(5) SS Division 'Wiking'
(6) SS Gebirgsdivision 'Nord'

together with the 1st and 2nd (Motorised) SS Brigades.

In 1942 the L.A.H. 'Das Reich' and 'Totenkopf' Divisions were formed into the first GeneralKommando der Waffen-SS as the SS Panzerkorps. These early German SS Divisions were troops of a high calibre and were used throughout the war on various fronts in a 'firebrigade' capacity. In 1941 it was decided to raise units of foreigners to serve in the . . . 'German crusade against Bolshevism'. These formations were trained under German military law but in the event of their having served previously in the national forces of their own countries they were permitted to enter German service with their previous 'foreign' ranking.

Certain units were selected for service with the Waffen-SS, the first being a Finnish Volunteer Battalion, a true mercenary unit serving under contract with an option of withdrawing their services at any time and a

Men of 'Legion Norwegen' in 1942. They wear army pattern tunics and the Norwegian emblem on the arm. Note the absence of helmet insignia.

Volunteer Regiment 'Nordwest' from Dutch-Belgian nationals. In addition further Dutchmen, Belgians, together with Norwegians and Danes were accepted for service in Legions bearing their national titles, 'Flandern', 'Niederlande', 'Norwegen' and 'Freikorps Danmark'; for ethnic reasons Spaniards, Croatians and Frenchmen were selected for service with the Army.

The Legions were trained under German NCOs although, after some confusion in the early days, they later had officers of their own nationality and NCOs promoted from within their own ranks. They wore German uniforms with SS rank badges plus distinctive cuff titles. However, they were ordered to wear National Emblems on their right collar patches in lieu of the ubiquitous SS runes and they also wore armshields in some form of their national colours on the left arm. Personnel from the Legions could be transferred to regular SS formations, and when they did so appear to have continued to wear the coloured armshield indicative of their nationality. In 1942 'Freikorps Danmark' was in the SS Division 'Totenkopf' and later served in the 1st SS Brigade. 'Legion Norwegen' joined the Danes in the Brigade later.

Belgian nationals of 'Legion Flandern' wearing cuff title. Legion armshield, and camouflage helmet covers.

At the close of 1942 the Waffen-SS had increased to a strength of almost 190,000 officers and men. Early in 1943 the Legions re-grouped and were formed into SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiments titled 'Nordland', 'Danmark', and 'Nederland', and at the same time Legion 'Norwegen' became the SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'Norge'. Later Panzer-Grenadier Regiments 23 'Norge' and 24 'Danmark' were grouped in the newly raised Division 'Nordland'. 'Legion Flandern' was considered unreliable and disbanded, its personnel being posted to other SS formations. The re-organisation also formed SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'Nederland' into an Independent Brigade. An enlarged Belgian unit was also formed as a Brigade and titled SS Freiwilligen Sturmbrigade 'Langemarck' taking in some of the remnants of 'Legion Flandern'.

In 1943 Wehrmacht French Volunteer Sturmbrigade Regiments were transferred to the Waffen-SS and became the SS 'Franzosisches' Freiwilligen Standarte (later the SS Freiwilligen Sturmbrigade 'Charlemagne'), together with the Belgian 'Rexist' Walloon Legion, later formed into the SS Freiwilligen Sturmbrigade—'Wallonie', and the northern Baltic States also contributed further Legions in the early part of that year. Latvian and Estonian conscripts went into the Waffen-SS and shortly after were amalgamated with the 1st and 2nd SS Infantry Brigades to become the Estnisches SS Freiwilligen Brigade and the Lettisches SS Freiwilligen Brigade respectively.

Not long after, even these units were re-organised and expanded into Baltic Divisions. Former Estonian and Latvian regular soldiers together with some SS Schutzmann-Bataillone personnel appear to have been conscripted into these units and continued for a period, to wear their

former national uniforms with original collar and shoulder strap insignia alongside comrades with normal SS collar badges.

The SS-Führungshauptamt Order (No 1574/43) dated 22nd October 1943 stated that all SS General Headquarters ('General Kommando') were to be numbered in Roman numerals and that Corps, Divisions, Brigades, Regiments and Self Supporting Battalions were to use Arabic Numerals, i.e., 'General Kommando VII (Lett.), SS-FRW. Armee Korps' and '1st. SS-Pz. Division Leibstandarte—SS Adolf Hitler'.

The wearing of devices on the shoulder straps was expressly forbidden by the same order.

A plan published by the Staff Command RFSS (reference TGB 1A28361143) gives the following order of battle for the Waffen-SS at the close of 1943:

General Kommando I SS Panzer Korps Leibstandarte
General Kommando II SS Panzer Korps
General Kommando III (Germanisches) SS Panzer Korps
General Kommando IV SS Panzer Korps
General Kommando V SS Gerbirgs Korps
General Kommando VI (Lettisches) SS Freiwilligen Armee Korps
General Kommando VII SS Panzer Korps

1. SS Panzer Division 'Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler'
2. SS Panzer Division 'Das Reich'
3. SS Panzer Division 'Totenkopf'
4. SS Polizei Panzer Grenadier Division
5. SS Panzer Division 'Wiking'
6. SS Gebirgs Division 'Nord'
7. SS Freiwilligen Gebirgs Division 'Prinz Eugen'
8. SS Kavallerie Division
9. SS Panzer Division 'Hohenstaufen'
10. SS Panzer Division 'Frundsberg'
11. SS Freiwilligen Panzer Grenadier Division 'Nordland'
12. SS Panzer Division 'Hitler Jugend'
13. SS Freiwilligen b.h. (*sic*) Gebirgs Division (Kroatisches)
14. Galizisches SS Freiwilligen Infantry Division (N.A.) (*sic*)
15. Lettisches SS Freiwilligen Infantry Division (N.A.) (*sic*)
16. SS Panzer Grenadier Division 'Reichführer SS'
17. SS Panzer Grenadier Division 'Götz von Berlichingen'

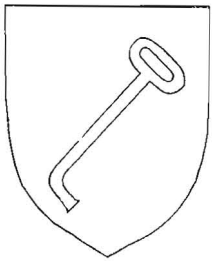
I SS Freiwilligen Grenadier Brigade (Motor.)
II Lettisches SS Freiwilligen Grenadier Brigade
III Estniches SS Freiwilligen Grenadier Brigade
IV SS Freiwilligen Panzer Grenadier Brigade 'Nederland'
– SS Sturmbrigade 'Reichführer SS'
V SS Sturmbrigade 'Langemarck'
VI SS Freiwilligen Sturmbrigade 'Wallonien'
SS Freiwilligen Ski Regt. 'Norge'
Franzosisches SS Freiwilligen Regiment
SS Kommando 'Obersalzburg'
1 SS Flak Abteilung Kommando Stab RFSS
11 SS Flak Abteilung Kommando Stab RFSS
Begleitbataillon RFSS
Landsturm Nederland

There is an addition to this table which states that of the 246,717 men of the Waffen-SS 156,438 were field troops, 64,311 were on special duties, maintenance and supply and that 25,968 were engaged in Headquarter, Staff and Administration duties.

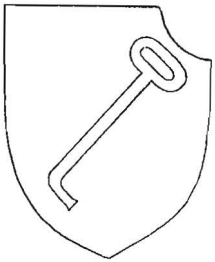
By the end of the war most of the Legions had been either absorbed as regiments into larger formations or had reverted to brigade status after serving for a while as larger independent formations.

THE DIVISIONS

1st SS Panzer Division 'Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler'

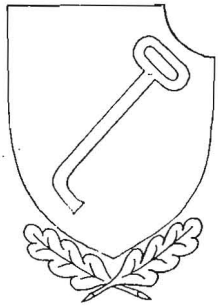


Until 1942



From 1942

Divisional Signs



Emblem of SS Pz Korps Leibstandarte of which the L.A.H. was the main component, 1943.

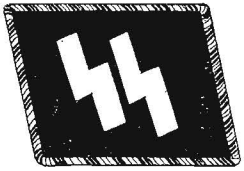
FORMED as a motorised division in 1939, it served in Poland in 1939, France 1940, and was converted into a Panzer Division in 1942 prior to the invasion of Russia. It was in Italy in late 1943, and also saw further service both in Russia and France in 1944. The Division took part in the Ardennes offensive, for which they were allotted the 150th Panzer Brigade (Trojan Horse) under Otto Skorzeny. In the Ardennes campaign a small unit consisting of a highly mobile group of 2,000 men, 39 tanks, 70 half-tracks and 33 assault guns was formed and known as the 'Kampfgruppe Peiper'. The L.A.H. ended the war as part of the VI SS Panzer Armee trying to defend the south eastern approaches to the Reich.

The Division* comprised: 1st Panzer (Armoured) Regiment, 1st and 2nd Panzer-Grenadier Regiments, 1st Panzer Artillery Regiment, 1st

* To avoid repetition the establishment of each division has not been set out in full. Most followed the general format of the L.A.H., with each unit numbered to correspond with the divisional number. Where in the higher numbered divisions there were departures from this type of establishment the anomalies are noted.

Sturmgeschütz (assault gun) Detachment, 1st Panzer Pioniere (Engineer) Battalion, 1st Panzer Aufklärung (Reconnaissance) Detachment, 1st Flak Artillerie (anti-aircraft) Detachment, 1st Panzer-Jäger (anti-tank) Detachment, 1st Werfer (mortar) Detachment, 1st Nachrichten (signals) Unit.
Divisional Garrison: Berlin Lichterfelde.
Collar patch: SS runes.
Cuff title: 'Adolf Hitler' (autograph).
Shoulder straps: 'L.A.H.' (monogram).

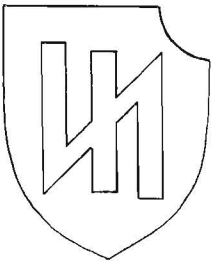
Left: Sholder strap of NCO with a slip-over 'L.A.H.' monogram.

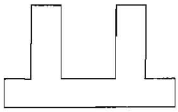


Collar patch pre-1940.

BELOW: The Corps of Drums followed by the Regimental Band of Leibstandarte 'Adolf Hitler' march through Vienna during the occupation of Austria in 1938. They are wearing the then standard SS-VT service dress. Note the musicians wearing 'swallow's nests', even with service dress. The bandmaster wears shirt and tie. Of special interest is the ornate 'Jingling Johnnie' (Schellenbaum). (Keystone).

2nd SS Panzer Division 'Das Reich'





Variation in use until 1944.

Divisional Signs (white).

A 1940 picture showing a man of SS-Regiment 'Der Führer'. The collar patch with the regimental number 3 indicates a veteran of pre-war service who appears to be wearing the first pattern SS field grey blouse issued in 1939.

Above: Cuff title of 1st SS Regiment, 'Deutschland' (VT).
Below: Cuff title of 3rd SS Regiment, 'Der Führer' (VT).

FORMED in 1941 from two regiments of the 'Verfügungsdivision', it fought in France under this name, the title 'Reich', later 'Das Reich', was conferred in April 1941. The Division served in Russia and Normandy, and took part in the Ardennes offensive. It was said to be 'inseparable' from the L.A.H., the two 'classic' Divisions forming the crack I-SS Panzer Korps. In 1943 Panzer-Genadier Regiment 'Langemarck' was attached to the division. 'Das Reich' ended the war in the VI SS Panzer Armee with the L.A.H.

Collar patch: SS runes (a photograph taken in 1944 shows an officer of 4th PG Regt. with "1" on collar patch).

Cuff titles: Divisional—'Das Reich';
1st SS Regt.—'Deutschland', (VT).
3rd SS Regt.—'Der Führer' (VT).
In 1942 SS Panzer-Grenadier Regt.—'Langemarck'

Shoulder straps: 'Deutschland'—Gothic 'D'.
'Der Führer'—Entwined 'DF'.

Left: Collar patch of 1st SS Regt, 'Deutschland'.

Right: Collar patch of 3rd SS Regt, 'Der Führer'.

3rd SS Panzer Division 'Totenkopf'

FORMED after the campaign in Poland in 1939 from élite elements of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd 'Totenkopf' regiments, together with police reservists, and a stiffening from the SS-VT. As a division it served in Russia and France. It included 3rd Panzer Regiment 'Totenkopf', 6th

SS Totenkopf Regt. 2

SS Totenkopf Regt. 3

SS Standarte 'Heimwehr Danzig' and other units.

Collar patches

(When the death's head appeared on its side the regimental number was worn under the lower jaw)

Panzer-Grenadier Regiment, 'Theodor Eicke', 5th Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'Thule', 3rd Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'Danmark'.

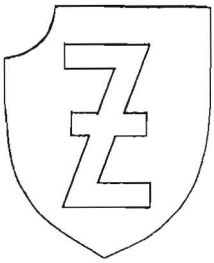
Collar patch: A white 'Totenkopf' (death's head) until 1942 at least and then some units at least wore the normal SS runes. The death's head device appears to have been worn both sideways and upright at the same period mainly on *both* collar patches, although there are instances of officers wearing the Totenkopf on the right patch only—or even the SS runes.

Cuff titles: A silver embroidered 'Death's Head' until 1943 and then the printed title 'Totenkopf'. Panzer Regt. No. 3 'Totenkopf' wore the 'Death's Head' until 1943 then the printed title. Worn also within the Division: 'Theodor Eicke', 'Thule', 'Danmark', Panzer-Grenadier Regt. No 7 III Battalion—'SS-Heimwehr Danzig'.

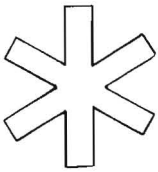
Divisional sign painted on transport vehicles, either in white or black outline form depending on background.

Below: Cuff title 6th Panzer-Grenadier Regt., 'Theodor Eicke'.

Below: Officer's cuff title, post 1943 style.



An 8cm mortar team of the Polizei-division in France in 1940. They wear army pattern tunics with Police pattern lace collar patches rather than the SS runes (IWM).



Left: Divisional sign 4th SS-Polizei Panzer-Grenadier Division. Right: Variation (in bright green) used before 1944.

4th SS-Polizei Panzer-Grenadier Division

RAISED at the same time as the 'Totenkopf' division from police re-servists and members of the 'Totenkopf' regiments, it was known as the SS Polizeidivision until 1943 when it was titled 4th SS Polizei Panzer-Grenadier Division. Never considered an élite formation it served in Greece, Russia and the Ardennes, and included the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Polizei Schützen-Regimenten ('Police Rifle Regiments' later to become the 7th, 8th and 9th Police SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiments). Until 1943, at least, the old police ranks of Gefreiter, Unteroffizier, Feldwebel, Leutnant, Hauptmann, Major, etc, were each used with the prefix 'Herr'.

Collar patches: From 1939 until 1942 or 1943 the police badge of a silvered eagle surrounded by a wreath on a black shield (edged with a silver line) was worn on the left side of helmets, an orange embroidered similar badge was worn on caps and the left upper arm. Two grey embroidered laces on a bright green ground were worn on either side of the collar. It appears (from photographic evidence) that at a later date the SS runes were taken into use with normal SS rank insignia.

Cuff title: SS 'Polizeidivision'.

5th SS Panzer-Grenadier Division 'Wiking'

FORMED in 1940, its personnel were mainly Danes, Dutch, Flemings, Norwegians, Finns, Estonians, etc. The division was raised around SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'Germania', later the 9th Panzer-Grenadier Regiment. It also included the SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'Nordland', and 10th Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'Westland', besides the usual support elements. The divisional garrison was in Klagenfurt, Carinthia, in Southern Austria, except for 'Germania', whose garrison was Hamburg. The SS Finnish Volunteer Battalion 'Nordost', originally only a small unit, was attached to 'Wiking' and later expanded to battalion strength.

Collar patches: SS runes. A badge comprising the prow of a Viking ship is also alleged to have been worn but no evidence has been traced of this badge.

Cuff titles: 'Wiking'. 'Germania', plus a Danish arm shield.
'Nordland', plus a Norwegian arm shield.
It was proposed to raise a Germanic-Finnish Regiment to be titled 'Kalevala' from the remnants of the 'Nordland' Regiment which had lost half its strength in Russia (the personnel lost were mainly Norwegians). The proposal proved to be abortive as the Finns, who were pure mercenaries under contract to fight with the Waffen-SS decided not to renew their agreements and decided to go home to Helsinki.
'Westland' plus a Belgian arm shield,
'Finnisches Frw. Bataillon/der Waffen-SS' (in two lines), plus a black arm shield with a white lion.

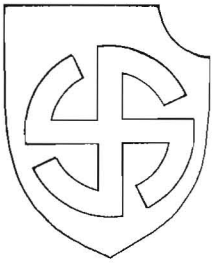
Above: Cuff titles of 9th Pz-Gren. Regt. 'Nordland' & 10th Pz-Gren. Regt. 'Westland'.

Above: Later style variations in cuff titles.

(unconfirmed)

Standarte 'Germania' (pre-1940 style)

Collar patches



Right: Divisional sign (white) for vehicles, often without the shield.

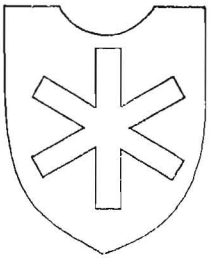
6th SS Gebirgs Division (Mountain Division) 'Nord'

FORMED in the summer of 1941 around 'Kampfgruppe Nord' (which comprised the 'Totenkopf' Regiments Nos 6, 7 and 9, the second mountain battalion, and a mountain signals detachment) it became a division in 1942 and included, the 11th SS Mountain Rifle Regiment 'Reinhard Heydrich' and 12th SS Mountain Rifle Regiment 'Michael Gassmair'. The division included the Norwegian SS Ski Jäger Battalion 'Norge'. The division served on special duties on the Finnish front as an element of the 20th Gebirgs Armee and later in the Ardennes. It capitulated in 1945. It was garrisoned at Trautenau.

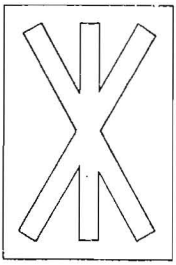
Collar patches: SS runes.

Cuff titles: 11th Regiment: 'Reinhard Heydrich'.
12th Regiment: 'Michael Gaissmair'.
SS Ski Battalion: 'Norge'.
The Norwegian Ski Battalion appears to have had no special collar distinction and from 1943 wore the SS edelweiss badge on the right sleeve and left side of the cap.

Cuff title of 11th SS Mountain Rifle Regiment, 'Reinhard Heydrich'.



Divisional signs painted on vehicles showing occasional variation on right, and regulation sign on left.

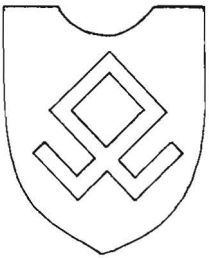


7th Freiwilligen Gebirgs Division (Mountain Division) 'Prinz Eugen'

RAISED in March 1942, this was the first of the so-called 'Foreign SS Divisions', its personnel being primarily Serbian militia elements of German stock, plus Banats and German Rumanians. It was originally sent to the Banat, Montenegro and Croatia to fight a ferocious campaign against the Yugoslavian partisans. In September 1943 the division was in Italy, but by February 1944 it was back in Bosnia. In 1944-45 the division included 13th SS (Gebirgsjäger) Mountain Rifle Regiment 'Artur Phleps'. The divisional garrison was at Villach, Carinthia, Austria (used after 1945 as a transit camp for British 8th Army personnel proceeding on leave).

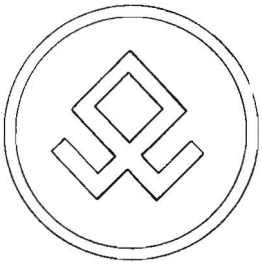
Collar patches: The Odal Rune, although some photographs show SS runes worn by some troops concurrently. A breast badge of SS runes worn on a green oval background appears to have been worn by some troops in 1943. A photograph of SS-Standartenführer Heinrich Peterson, Kommandant of the Gebirgsjäger Regiment No 7 shows the Odal Rune on both collar patches.

Cuff titles: 'Prinz Eugen', and 'Artur Phleps' for 13th Regiment.
Note: The American war time Intelligence documents which state that general officers of this division wore the Odal Rune on the sleeve, beneath the eagle are incorrect. This was only worn by the Commander Artur Phleps.



Left: Divisional sign.

Right: Occasional variation of sign.



Left: Collar patch (the Odal Rune). See text above for further applications of this divisional badge.

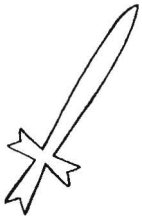
8th SS Kavallerie Division (Cavalry Division) 'Florian Geyer'

THIS division was formed in September 1942 by expanding the existing SS Cavalry Brigade (1st and 2nd 'Florian Geyer' SS Cavalry Regiments, plus SS Reconnaissance and Artillery detachments). The division served in the Balkans and Hungary, and included the 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th SS Cavalry Regiments besides the normal ancillary units.

Collar patches: SS runes.
Cuff title: 'Florian Geyer'.

Left: Divisional sign.

Right: Simplified variation of divisional sign.

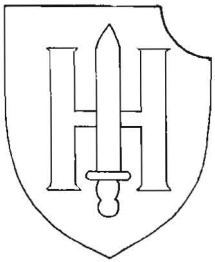


9th SS Panzer Division 'Hohenstaufen'

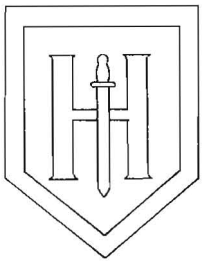
FORMED along with the 10th Panzer Division 'Frundsberg' in December 1942, they together became the crack II SS Army Korps. The division included the 19th and 20th SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiments and served in France, and Poland. As part of the II SS Panzer Korps it was regrouping outside Arnhem when the British airborne landings occurred in September 1944 and took a major part in repelling the attack. It ended the war in the VI SS Panzer Armee with the L.A.H. and 'Das Reich' fighting as rearguard in Hungary and Austria.

Collar patches: SS runes.
Cuff title: 'Hohenstaufen'.

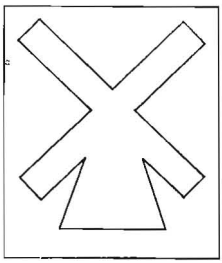
Divisional sign.



Variation: Light blue on yellow.



Variation (after Arnhem in 1944)—red symbolic windmill.

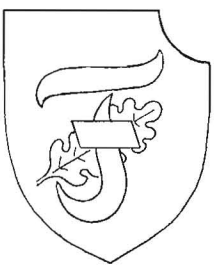


10th Panzer Division 'Frundsberg'

FORMED with the 9th division, above, in the winter of 1942-43 it was originally proposed to be titled the Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'Karl der Gross'. The division served in Russia, Northern France, Holland and in Poland (Silesia) where its strength was made up by the 21st and 22nd Panzer-Grenadier Regiments. Until 1944 it included the 10th Panzer Regiment 'Langemarck'. As with the 9th Division it was refitting outside Arnhem at the time of the British assault. It was sent to defend Njimegen and was commanded at this time by Brigadeführer Heinz Harmel.

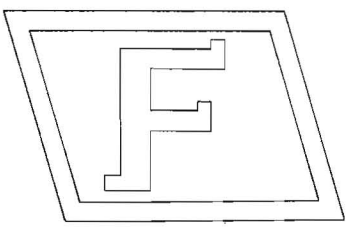
Collar patches: SS runes.
Cuff titles: 'Frundsberg'.
'Langemarck' until 1944.

Cuff title



Left: Divisional sign.

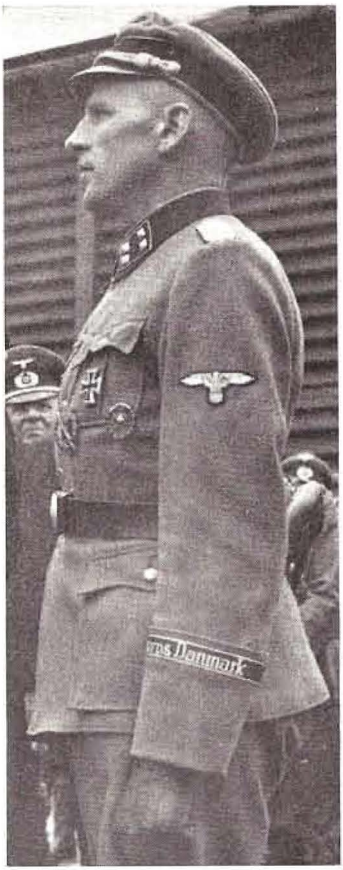
Right: Variant of divisional sign painted white on yellow background.



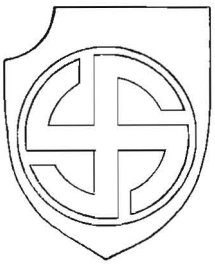
11th SS Freiwilligen Panzer-Grenadier Division 'Nordland'

BY the spring of 1943 the 11th 'Nordland' Division had been created by amalgamating some of the original Foreign Legions together with a cadre from the Division 'Wiking'. It included the 23rd SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'Norge' (Norwegisches Nr. 1), the 24th SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'Danmark' (Danisch Nr. 1), and the SS Panzer-Abteilung (Detachment) II 'Hermann von Salza', besides the usual support elements. The division served in Russia, and ended the war taking part in the fighting in Berlin. Many of the personnel were Norwegians, originating from the Legion Norwegen.

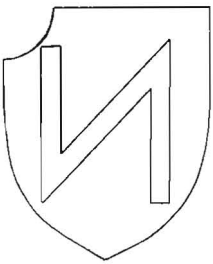
Collar patches: The circular swastika and Danish sun wheel.
Cuff titles: 'Danmark' and 'Freikorps Danmark' (with the Danish arm shield),
'Norge' (with the Norwegian shield), 'Hermann von Salza'.



ABOVE, LEFT: Sturmbannführer Von Schalburg who was later the commander of 'Freikorps Danmark' and was killed in action in Russia. He wears the ribbon of the Iron Cross 2nd Class in the second button hole. ABOVE, RIGHT: Sturmbannführer Martinsen of 'Freikorps Danmark'. Note the absence of a national armshield (Museet for Danmarks Frihedskamp).



Divisional sign.



Variant of the divisional sign.

Sun wheel.

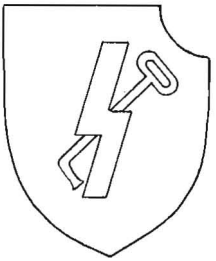
Collar patch (circular swastika).

12th SS Panzer Division 'Hitler Jugend'

THE unit was formed from senior members of the Hitler Youth in the summer of 1943. Its officers and senior NCOs were mainly drawn from the L.A.H. The unit was first stationed in Belgium. It later took part in the battle of the Falaise Gap and the Ardennes offensive and finally surrendered with the VI SS Panzer Armee east of Vienna. Its composition included the SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiments 25 and 26, the normal support units, plus an SS motorcycle Battalion, No. 22.

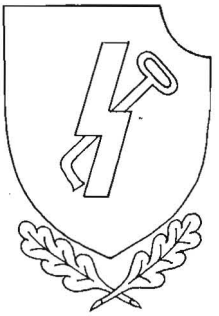
Collar patches: SS runes.

Cuff title: Autograph 'Hitler Jugend'.



Left: Divisional sign.

Right: Divisional sign 1943-44.



13th Waffen Gebirgs Division der SS 'Handschar' (Croatian No 1)

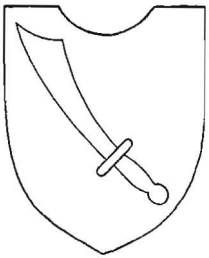
Men of 13th Waffen Gebirgs Division der SS 'Handschar' in Jugoslavia. They wear standard Waffen-SS uniform with a fez (IWM-MH5905).

RAISED in 1943 from a cadre of the 7th Division and Croatian volunteers, as the SS Division 'Bosnien-Herzogowina' (SS Div-BH), it was shortly after retitled 'Handschar'. It saw service mainly in the Balkans. A Moslem

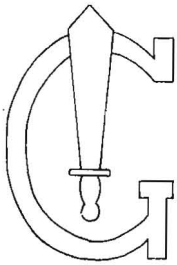
formation, an unusual distinction was the wearing of the Fez (in moss green for normal dress and deep red for officers in full dress). The Totenkopf and SS eagle were worn on the front of this head-dress. It included SS Freiwilligen Gebirgs Jäger Regiments (Volunteer Mountain Rifle Regts.) Nos 27 and 28 (Kroatisches Nr 1 & 2) besides the usual elements and had Muslim priests attached to each. The division had a short and chequered history. It mutinied in France, served against the partisans in Yugoslavia and was eventually disbanded and reformed as the 13th SS Gebirgs Grenadier Regiment 'Handschar'.

Collar patches: Swastika surmounted by a hand holding a scimitar.

Armshield: No cuff titles appear to have been worn. Red and white chequered arm shield was worn.



Regulation



Variation

Collar patch.

←Divisional signs.

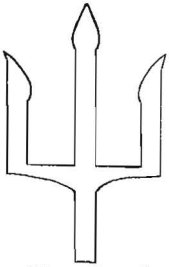
14th Waffen Grenadier Division der SS 'Galizien'

FORMED from Ukranians, mainly from the former Austro-Hungarian province known as Galicia which had latterly become a German speaking part of Poland, the division which was sometimes referred to as an 'SS Schutzendivision' was also known as the 'Ruthenian' and to add to the confusion was re-titled 'Ukranian No. 1' in 1945. The formation included SS Waffen Grenadier Regts. 29, 30 and 31 together with reconnaisance, artillery assault gun, engineer and signal detachments besides an SS Fusilier Battalion. The division fought on the Eastern Front where it was cut off, surrounded and so severely mauled that only a few thousand Ukranians, mostly support troops, got out of the trap. The remnants were sent to Moravia for refitting and to gather reinforcements but appear to have seen no further action.

Collar patch: A rampant lion. The Trident of St. Vladimir is also mentioned as being worn by Ukranian No. 1 but cannot be confirmed.

Cuff title: 'Galizien'.

Armshield: A light blue shield with a yellow rampant lion and three crowns.



(Unconfirmed)

Left: Divisional signs.

Collar patch.

15th Waffen Grenadier Division der SS (Lettisches No 1)

RAISED in 1943 from Latvian security police (Schutzmanntruppen) it served with the 19th Waffen Grenadier Division der SS (Lettisches Nr 2) as the 6th (Lettische) SS-Freiwilligen Armee-Korps. It saw service in the Baltic areas of Latvia and Estonia and was almost wiped out in Pommerania. The remnants fought it out to the death in Berlin. The unit was made up of the SS Freiwilligen Waffen Grenadier Regiments 32, 33, 34 (Lettisches 1, 2 and 3), the SS Freiwilligen Artillerie Regiment Nr 15 (Lettisches Art. Regiment No 1) plus usual support troops.

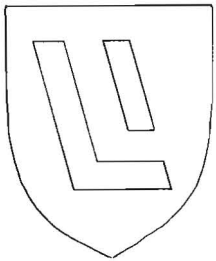
Collar patches: Three 5-pointed stars, surrounded by a ring and (outside that) an 11-pointed ring of rays. (The sun rays and three stars formed part of the Latvian coat of arms.)

Cuff titles: None.

Armshield: Dark red with white diagonal bar and 'Latvia' or 'Latvjia'. (There were several versions of this badge.)

Above: Collar patch. (A second collar patch similar in design to the arm and sword of the 20th is alleged. It is said to have had 3 stars instead of the moon.)

Right: Divisional sign.

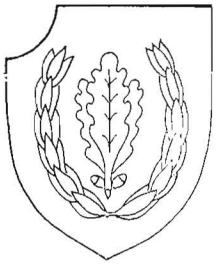


16th SS Panzer-Grenadier Division 'Reichsfuhrer SS'

RAISED in October 1943 this was a 'pure' German division formed from an Assault Brigade (Sturmbrigade RFSS) of Himmler's bodyguard, seeing service in Italy and France, and ending the war in VI SS Panzer Armee with the L.A.H. and 'Das Reich'. It was comprised of the 35th, and 36th SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiments and all the normal supporting units. (It is also stated to have contained the SS Panzer-Grenadier Lehr. Regiment and, at one time, Grenadier Battalion No 365 of the Wehrmacht.)

Collar patches: SS runes.

Cuff title: 'Reichsführer SS' (not to be confused with the cuff title 'RFSS' worn by Himmler's Staff).



Left: Divisional sign of 16th SS Panzer-Grenadier Division 'Reichsführer SS'.

Right: Divisional sign of 17th Panzer-Grenadier Division.

Below: Cuff title of 17th SS Panzer-Grenadier Division 'Götz von Berlichingen'.

17th SS Panzer-Grenadier Division 'Götz von Berlichingen'

THIS division was raised at the same time as the 16th Division, October 1943. It was a 'German' division and served in Normandy in June 1944, and, together with the 2nd, fought stubbornly against the Americans in the Cherbourg breakout. The division was also involved in operation 'Nordwind' in the Alsace together with the 36th Division, and later the 6th and 10th Divisions. Besides the normal support units the division included the Panzer-Grenadier Regiments 37 and 38.

Collar patches: SS runes.

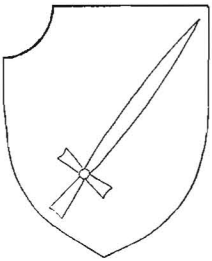
Cuff title: 'Götz von Berlichingen'.

18th SS Freiwilligen Panzer-Grenadier Division 'Horst Wessel'

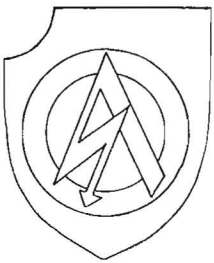
THE 1st SS (Motorised) Brigade formed the cadre of this formation which was raised in 1944 mainly from young Nazi party volunteers from Hungary and Yugoslavia. The division was in action in the Caen area in June 1944, and later saw action in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, subsequently surrendering to the Russians. The division included SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiments Nos 39 and 40.

Collar patches The SA emblem (Sig rune and A united).

Cuff title: 'Horst Wessel'.



Above: Collar patch, 18th Pz-Gren. Div. Left: Regulation pattern divisional sign for 18th SS Pz-Gren. Div. Right: Alternative divisional sign, 18th SS Pz-Gren. Div.



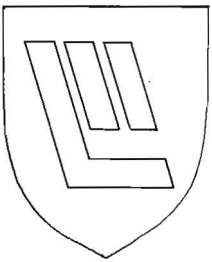
19th Waffen Grenadier Division der SS (Lettisches No 2)

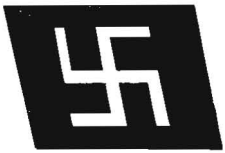
THIS formation was raised from Latvian 'schutzmanntruppen' and Latvian conscripts of the former Latvian Volunteer SS Brigade in 1944. The division served entirely in Russia and was bracketed with the 15th in the VI Lettisches SS Freiwilligen Armee Korps. The division was part of the force cut off in the Kurland enclave in Latvia in 1945, and surrendered to the Russians. The division included the Freiwilligen Waffen Grenadier Regiments Nos 42, 43 and 44 (Lettisches Nr 4, 5 and 6) and the SS Freiwilligen Artillerie Regiment Nr 19 (Lettisches Artillery Regiment No 2).

Collar patch: Upright swastika (sometimes referred to as the Fylfot cross).

Cuff title: In February 1945 the Waffen Grenadier Regiments of this division were granted the titles 'Voldemars Veiss' and 'Heinrich Schuldt' but it is not certain that these cuff titles were ever issued.

Armshield: As 15th Division.





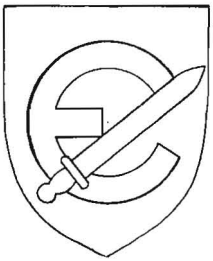
Collar patch.

Left: Divisional sign.

Double swastika of Estonian Legion (Estonisches) (see below).

20th Waffen Grenadier Division der SS (Estnisches No 1)

RAISED in 1944 mainly from Estonian members of the 'Wiking' Division (formerly of the Estonian Freiwilligen Brigades), the Division served in the Baltic area and Silesia, eventually retreating into Czechoslovakia and surrendered to the Russians on the borders of Bohemia. Until November 1944 the division comprised the SS Freiwilligen Grenadier Regiments Nos 42, 43, 45 and 46. After this it was reduced to Brigade strength made up of the SS Freiwilligen Grenadier Regiments 45, 46 and 47 plus



Left: Divisional sign.

20th Waffen Grenadier Division.

Above: Collar patch.

ancilliary units.

Collar patches: A mailed arm holding a short sword with an Estonian stylised 'E' in the bend of the arm. Double swastika as Estonian Legion.

Cuff title: None.

Armshield: Blue, black and white horizontal bands or golden yellow shield with three blue lions.

21st Waffen Gebirgs Division der SS 'Skanderbeg' (Albanisches Nr 1)

RAISED on 14th April 1944, the division was recruited from members of the Albanian Nazi Party. It was a Moslem formation and showed early signs of unreliability with a high desertion rate, so much so in fact that drafts from other SS units in the Aegean area were sent to reinforce it. This proved abortive and the division as such was disbanded and its personnel re-formed into the 21st SS Gebirgs Grenadier Regiment—'Skanderbeg', which served in the savage fighting in Yugoslavia with the 7th Division. Some of the personnel apparently went to the newly raised 32nd Division. In 1945 it was on the Oder Front. As with other Moslem formations, the units had their own priests but in this case they wore the Albanian grey skull-cap headdress in lieu of the fez. From April 1944 until September 1944 the main elements of the division were the SS Freiwilligen Gebirgs Jäger Regiments Nos 1 and 2. After this date they were re-numbered as the Waffen SS Gebirgs Jäger Regiments Nos 50 and 51.

Collar patches: The Skanderbeg helmet with horned goat crest.

Cuff title: 'Skanderbeg'.

Armshield: Dark red shield with black double headed eagle.

Left: Divisional sign.

21st Waffen Gebirgs Division.

Above: Collar patch.

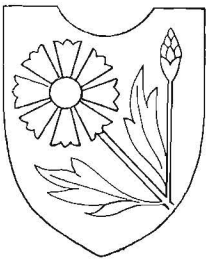
22nd Freiwilligen Kavallerie Division der SS 'Maria Theresa'

RAISED in April 1944 from ethnic Germans of Hungarian nationality, the division was never considered an élite formation. The division got caught up in the mælstrom of the Russian advance on Budapest and together with the 8th Division was virtually annihilated in the encircled city. Its main units were SS Kavallerie Regiments Nos 1, 2 and 3.

Collar patches: Cornflower, with leaves and buds.

Cuff title: None known.

[Badges on next page]



Divisional sign.

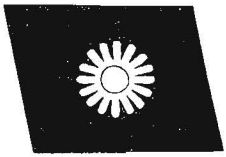
22nd Kavallerie Division.

Collar patch.

23rd Waffen Gebirgs Division der SS 'Kama' (Kroatisches Nr 2)

THIS formation largely comprised anti-Communist Croatians, with some ethnic Germans and German elements included as stiffening. It proved very short lived and was disbanded after only a few months. Its personnel were then used to reinforce various other volunteer formations in the Balkan area including the 31st Division. This unit also wore the Muslim fez as a headdress. While it existed the formation included the SS Waffen Gebirgs Jäger Regiment (Kroatisches Nr 3) and the SS Waffen Gebirgs Jäger Regiment (Kroatisches Nr 4) plus the SS Gebirgs Artillery Regiment No 23 and other support units.

Collar patches: A stylised sunflower.
Cuff title: None.
Armshield: Red and white chequered arm shield as 13th Division.

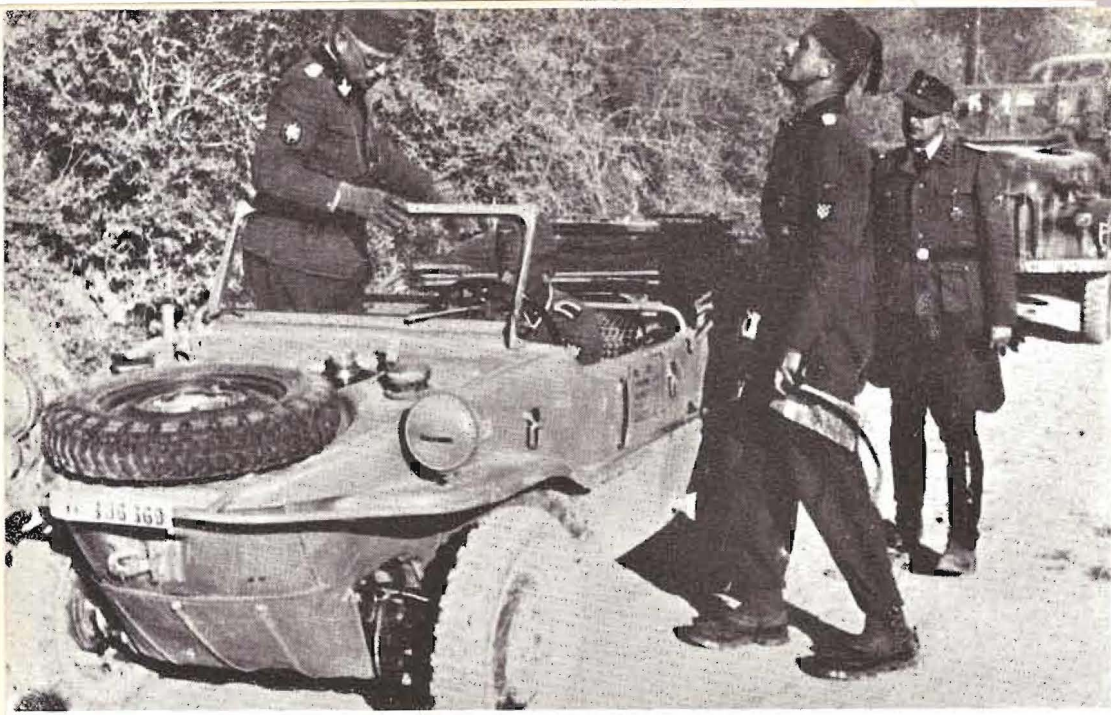


Collar patch.

Officers of 23rd SS Mountain Division 'Kama' in Jugoslavia. Note the normal SS runes and absence of a legion shield on the left arm. Also shown are mountain boots and leather leggings (IWM-MH5909).

RIGHT: Scharführer of Regiment 'Deutschland', SS-VT, in earth grey service dress with early pattern field cap, 1937-38.

LEFT: Tambour-Major of '. . .Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler' in black parade dress, 1938, and wearing the 1935 pattern helmet. He has the rank of Unterscharführer and wears the traditional musicians' 'swallows nests' wings at the shoulder.



Officers of 23rd Bosnian and Croatian Mountain Division 'Kama' in Jugoslavia. Note the Croatian shield on the left arm of the officer on the right and the 'Edelweiss' badge on the sleeve of the officer at left. Officer in forage cap at rear wears breeches and shirt and tie with his army pattern tunic worn open at the neck (IWM-MH5907).

23rd Freiwilligen Panzer-Grenadier Division 'Nederland'

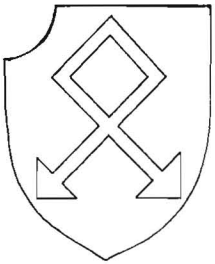
FORMED around the SS Freiwilligen Panzer-Grenadier Brigade 'Nederland' which included the SS Freiwilligen Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'General Seyffart' No 48, the SS Freiwilligen Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'De Ruiter' (also spelt 'De Ruyter') No 49, and the SS Fusilier Battalion No 54. It was given the numerical seniority 23 following the disbandment of the aforementioned 'Kama' formation, and was finally classified as a Division in December 1944. The units served in Russia in the Leningrad and Kurland areas and were eventually trapped. They were subsequently relieved by sea and later fought around Stettin. Retreating to the West some survivors were eventually captured by the Americans.

Collar patches: SS runes.

Cuff titles: SS Freiwilligen Panzer-Grenadier Regt. No 48—'General Seyffart'
SS Freiwilligen Panzer-Grenadier Regt. No 49—'De Ruyter'.

Armshield: Orange, white and blue diagonal or horizontal bars.

[Badges on next page]



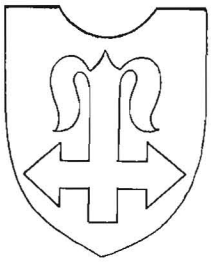
Collar patches (variations)

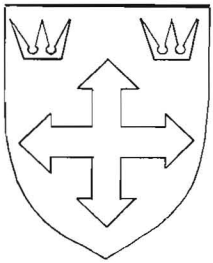
Left: Divisional sign, 23rd Pz-Gren. Div. 'Nederland'.

24th Waffen Gebirgs (Karstjäger) Division (Mountain Rock Climbing Division) der SS

RAISED originally in July 1942 as an élite high mountain rock climbing company, it gradually increased to battalion strength by November of the same year, 1944 saw it at brigade strength until it was finally given divisional status by July 1944. It was recruited from ethnic Germans from the Italian Alpine provinces and is sometimes referred to as an Italian Division. Its original role was anti-partisan in the Yugoslav theatre of war, but was transferred to the Italian rear areas in 1943. It included the SS Gebirgs (Karstjäger) Regiments Nos 59 and 60.

Collar patch: Not known but probably SS runes.
Cuff title: Not known.
Armshield: Unknown, probably Wehrmacht style Italian green, white and red horizontal bars with 'Italia' above in white.





Collar patch, 25th Div. 'Hunyadi'.

Left: 25th Waffen Grenadier Division.

Above: 24th Waffen Gebirgs Division.

25th Waffen Grenadier Division der SS 'Hunyadi' (Ungarisches Nr 1)

RAISED in the last months of the war, this formation served against the Russians. It retreated into Germany and eventually surrendered to the Americans. The original title appears to have been spelled 'Hunjadi', but in April 1945, mention appears of 'Hunyadi'. Before surrender the Division included the SS Freiwilligen Grenadier Regiments Nos 61, 62, 63 together with the SS Fusilier Company No 25, and a Freiwilligen Waffen SS Ski-Batallion.

Collar patch: 'H'.
Cuff title: None known.

RIGHT: Hauptscharführer of 'Totenkopf' Division, 1940. He is wearing Army pattern tunic and trousers, though the insignia is in the normal SS positions. On his left breast is the infantry assault badge. The cuff stripes indicate his position as 'Spiess' (sergeant-major).

LEFT: Rottenführer of 4th SS Polizei-division in 1940, wearing Army pattern tunic and trousers and the distinctive 'Polizei' emblem on the helmet.

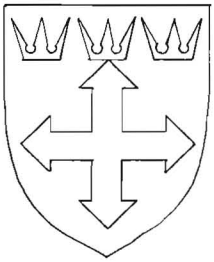
LEFT: Brigadeführer (General-major der Waffen-SS) in 1941 wearing the standard overcoat with light grey facings indicating an officer of general rank. His cuff title is 'SS-Hauptamt'.

RIGHT: Adjutant (Obersturmführer) of SS-Cavalry Division 'Florian Geyer' in 1941. He wears an army pattern tunic and the adjutant's aigulettes worn with parade dress.

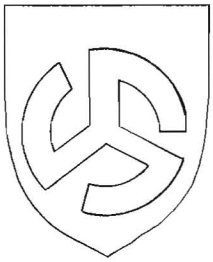
26th Waffen Grenadier Division der SS (Ungarisches Nr 2)

LITTLE information on this unit can be traced except that it was raised in August 1944 from anti-Communist Hungarian elements and served against the Russians. It included the SS Freiwilligen Waffen Grenadier Regiments Nos 64, 65 and the SS Freiwilligen Fusilier Company No 85

Collar patch: Not confirmed.
Cuff title: None known.



Above: 26th Waffen Grenadier Division.



Above: 27th Freiwilligen Grenadier Division.

Collar patch of 27th Div. 'Langemarck'.

Left: Divisional sign.

27th SS Freiwilligen Grenadier Division 'Langemarck'

ALTHOUGH never reaching more than a Brigade strength the formation ended the war as a nominal division. Originally the 2nd SS Infantry regiment 'Langemarck', attached to the 2nd 'Das Reich' Division, by 1943 the original Flemish unit had been expanded to Brigade strength and was then known as the Langemarck Sturm Brigade. The Division served in Russia and Poland and included the SS Freiwilligen Grenadier Regiments Nos 66, 67 and 68, plus the SS Fusilier Battalion No 27 and support units.

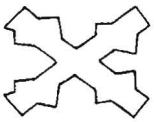
Collar patch: A three armed swastika.
Cuff title: 'Langemarck'.
Armshield: Yellow with a black rampant lion (two versions known, one with a single and one with a double tail).

28th SS Freiwilligen Panzer-Grenadier Division 'Wallonie'

THIS was the second Belgian division and was formed from the remnants of the original Legion 'Wallonie'. It was decimated on the Russian front, but later appeared in the Ardennes and Northern Poland. A Kampfgruppe 'Wallonie' forming part of the III Panzer Army attempted to stop the Russian advance on Berlin. It was destroyed at the Altdamm bridgehead. The unit included the SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiments 'Wallonie' Nos 69 and 70 plus normal support units. By 1945 the division had been reduced

Regulation

Divisional signs.



Variation

to a Sturm Brigade (No 5).

Collar patch: SS runes.
The traditional Ragged Cross of Burgundy is also alleged to have been worn but this has not been proved.

Cuff title: 'Wallonie'.

Armshield: Black, yellow and red vertical stripes and the word 'Wallonie' in white in a horizontal black panel above.

ABOVE: Leon Degrelle was the officer commanding 28th Freiwilligen Panzer-Grenadier Division 'Wallonie. Note absence of cuff title and the army style national shield (Musée Royal De L'Armee et D'Histoire Militaire, Brussells). BELOW: 'Wallonie' cuff title.

29th Waffen Grenadier Division der SS (Russisches Nr 1)

THIS formation had a very short life its personnel being dispersed to the Vlasov 'POA' units and the remainder to the 30th Division.

Collar patch: Cross over swords.

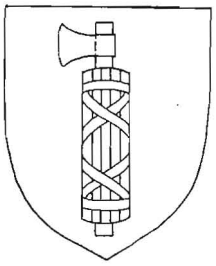
Cuff title: None.

Armshield: Green shield with golden yellow letters POA or a white, red edged shield with a light blue saltire cross.

RIGHT: Scharführer of the SS-Mountain Division 'Prinz Eugen', 1942. Note the distinctive runic collar patch emblem and the eidelweiss badges on cap and tunic. He wears the ribbon of the Iron Cross, 2nd Class and an infantry assault badge.

LEFT: Officer of 10th SS Division 'Frundsberg' at Arnhem in 1944, wearing the camouflage shelter quarter and carrying a machine pistol.

ABOVE: Oberstürmführer of panzer troops wearing the black combination suit issued to tank crews. Shown with service cap. RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM: Schutzmütze beret worn by scharführer in 1939-40. Note pink piping on collar. Untersturmführer in feldmutze, Hauptstürmführer in Einheitsmütze field cap.



Divisional sign.

29th Waffen Grenadier Division (Italienisches Nr 1)

Collar patch

29th Waffen Grenadier Division der SS (Italienisches Nr 1)

THE second 29th Division was drawn in the main from the Freiwilligen Waffen Grenadier Brigade der SS 'Italien' together with Italian Black Shirt Fascist Militia and some Army volunteers. For some time it could only achieve Brigade strength but is believed to have been considerably expanded later. It served in anti-partisan duties in the back areas. On formation the Division comprised the Freiwilligen Grenadier Regiments Nos 71, 72, 73 and 74 plus a so-called SS Fusilier Battalion.

Collar patch: The 'fasces', the axe and stick emblem of Ancient Roman unity (as a Brigade on red cloth, but as a division on black cloth like other SS formations).

Cuff title: None—a title has been seen lettered 'Italien' but not authenticated.

Armshield: Black with a yellow 'fasces' picked out red.

Eagle: Italian SS units wore a special 'Roman' eagle with the 'fasces' in its talons. At first on red cloth a version on black cloth is said to have been worn later.

Helmets: Italian helmets were worn with the SS rune badge, either as a transfer or painted directly on. In some cases the Italian eagle is alleged to have been carried on the helmet.

The Italians wore national uniforms (usually the parachutist's blouse with yoke over the shoulder but with German badges). German camouflaged clothing or Italian issues were worn together with anoraks and parkas.

30th Waffen Grenadier Division der SS (Russian No 2)

AS previously mentioned the 30th Division was raised from former members of the Russian 29th together with renegade Russian 'Schuma-bataillone' personnel. These were field security units raised by the SS from Russian prisoners of war. The division was virtually annihilated during the German retreat from France in 1944 and most of the remnants went into the Russian 29th and later into the Vlasov command. To add to the confusion of these Russian formations the title was changed to 'Weisseruthenian' just before it was dispersed. The division included the

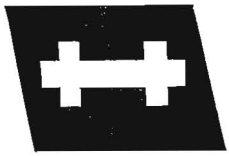
Waffen Grenadier Regiments 75, 76 and 77 plus support units with the numerical distinction 30.

Collar patches: Four versions are said to have been worn but have not been confirmed (1) The Eastern Church cross (2) The The Trident of St Vladimir (3) A wolf's head and (4) A round shield over a sword.

All these emblems have been quoted for Russian units but it has proved impossible to trace which, if any, were actually worn.

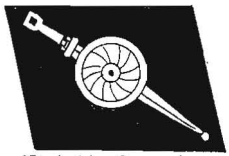
Cuff title: None.

Armshield: A white shield with a red vertical stripe with a yellow Eastern Church cross on it. Yellow 'Weisseruthenian' above on a red panel. The Russian security police wore black shoulder straps with grey embroidered swastikas and a grey embroidered round black arm badge consisting of a laurel wreath encircling a diamond shaped swastika with 'Treu Tapfer Gehorsam' around it.

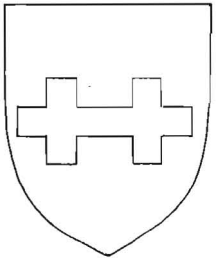


Collar patches (variations)

(Probably Osttürkischer Waffen verbände der SS.)



(Probably Caucasian Waffen Verbände der SS.)



Divisional sign.

Below: Cuff titles of 32nd and 33rd Divisions.

32nd SS Panzer-Grenadier Division '30. Januar'

THIS division was created by collating a cadre of the instructors and students from the SS Panzer and Panzer-Grenadier schools, further personnel from other divisions, and retreating volunteer units. The title '30 Januar' was chosen to commemorate the day Hitler came to power. It included the SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'Schill' No 86 and 'Falke' No 87, plus support units. It saw service on the Russian front and in the defence of Berlin and included Kampfgruppe 'Mosinger' and 'Rossner'.

Collar patch: SS runes.

Cuff title: '30 Januar'. It is not known whether the 86th and 87th Regiments had cuff titles.

Waffen Grenadier Regiments 75, 76 and 77 plus support units with the numerical distinction 30.

Collar patches: Four versions are said to have been worn but have not been confirmed (1) The Eastern Church cross (2) The The Trident of St Vladimir (3) A wolf's head and (4) A round shield over a sword.

All these emblems have been quoted for Russian units but it has proved impossible to trace which, if any, were actually worn.

Cuff title: None.

Armshield: A white shield with a red vertical stripe with a yellow Eastern Church cross on it. Yellow 'Weisseruthenian' above on a red panel. The Russian security police wore black shoulder straps with grey embroidered swastikas and a grey embroidered round black arm badge consisting of a laurel wreath encircling a diamond shaped swastika with 'Treu Tapfer Gehorsam' around it.

Collar patches (variations)

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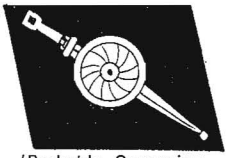
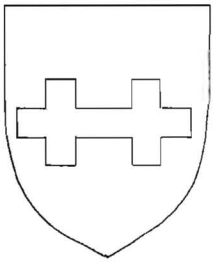


(Probably Caucasian Waffen Verbände der SS.)



Divisional sign.

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Collar patch: SS runes.

Cuff title: '30 Januar'. It is not known whether the 86th and 87th Regiments had cuff titles.

RIGHT: Gefreiter of the Terek Cossacks in 1944. Note the Army pattern national emblem on the Army type tunic, and the 'foreign legion' national emblem on the left sleeve.

LEFT: Crewman (Sturmmann) of armoured troops wearing the field grey combination suit as issued to crews of assault guns and SP guns. Helmet cover is of the spring pattern.

LEFT: Oberstürmführer of Waffen-SS Grenadier Brigade 'Italien' in 1944. This formation wore its original Italian uniform with German rank badges. Note the official SS arm shield.

RIGHT: A schütze of the Waffen-SS Grenadier Brigade 'Italien', wearing Army style national arm shield and original Italian uniform.

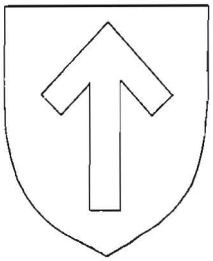
33rd Waffen Cavalry Division SS (Hungarian No 4) later Waffen Grenadier Division 'Charlemagne' (Franzosisches No 1)

MADE up from the SS Kavallerie Regiments Nos 88 and 89 it was annihilated around Budapest in 1945. From the remnants, the 33rd Waffen Grenadier Division 'Charlemagne' was formed, incorporating elements of the original Wehrmacht French Volunteer Infantry Regiment No 638 and the 'Legion Tricolore' which had been transferred and expanded into an SS Brigade by 1944, and known as SS Freiwilligen Sturm brigade 'Charlemagne' No. 6. This unit was destroyed in the defence of Berlin. Proposed title for this division was 'Joan of Arc' but this was not adopted.

Collar patch: Sword with two flames (unconfirmed).

Cuff title: 'Charlemagne' (see page 43).

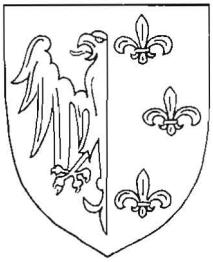
Armshield: Blue, white and red with 'France' above was worn as 'Charlemagne' (Franzosisches No 1).



32nd Division

Collar patch (33rd Division).

Divisional signs



33rd Division

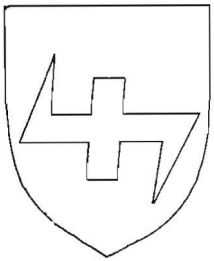
34th Waffen Grenadier Division SS 'Landstorm Nederland'

RECRUITED and served in Holland on guard and police duties. It included SS Freiwilligen Panzer-Grenadier Regiments No 48 and 49 (Niederlandisches Nr 1 and 2) and SS Freiwilligen Regiment 57.

Collar patch: Vertical or horizontal Dutch Nazi party symbol (the Wolf's hook), or a white metal flaming grenade.

Cuff title: 'Landstorm Nederland'.

Armshield: Orange, white and blue stripes.



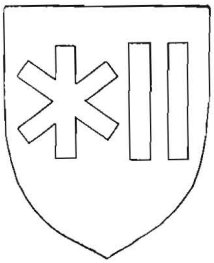
Divisional sign
(collar patch symbol similar).

35th SS Police Grenadier Division

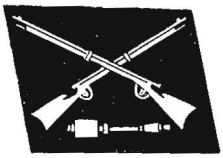
THE 35th Division was a second Police division raised from 'Ordnungspolizei' elements in 1944-45.

Collar patch: SS runes.

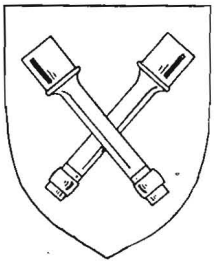
Cuff title: None known.



35th SS Division.



36th SS Division collar patch.



36th SS Division.

36th SS Sturm-Division 'Dirlewanger'

PERHAPS the most infamous unit of the Waffen SS, it was originally raised in 1940 as a small Specialist Commando by Dr Oskar Dirlewanger, and known as the 'Wilddiebkommando Orianberg'. It first served as a labour battalion and a camp guard unit and was alleged to have been raised by Himmler following a suggestion by Hitler, as a unit consisting of experienced poachers. It later became 'Sonnderkommando Dirlewanger'. It was further increased to two regiments of three battalions each and operated behind the Russian front against partisans. Many native Russians were recruited and by 1943 the regiments contained a high number of non-Germanic personnel. In 1944 it was sent to Warsaw to help Kaminski put down the rebellion and went to Slovakia and Northern Hungary where it continued to operate on an anti-partisan basis. It was up-graded to Divisional status in 1945, but never reached anywhere near strength. It was engaged in 'Operation Nordwind' and finally capitulated to the British.

Collar patch: Crossed rifles with horizontal stick grenade beneath. (Crossed grenades also alleged to have been worn as an alternative collar patch.)

Cuff title: 'Dirlewanger' (not confirmed).

37th Waffen Cavalry Division 'Lutzow'

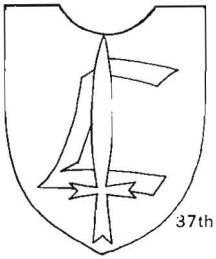
COMPRISED the SS Cavalry Regiments Nos 93 and 94, plus the SS Artillery Regiment No 37. Made up almost entirely of Hungarian nationals of Nazi sympathies, little else is known of the formation.

Collar patch: Not known but probably SS runes.

Cuff title: None known.

RIGHT: SS-Feldgendarme (Unterscharführer) of 13. Mountain Division ('Handschar'), 1943. He is wearing the Army pattern tunic and the police gorget plate and arm badge. The mountain troops' Edelweiss badge is on the right arm. The weapon is the MP 38 and the special magazine carriers for this gun are worn on the belt.

LEFT: Unterstürmführer of 13. Mountain Division 'Handschar', 1943, in walking out dress. Note the distinctive 'Handschar' collar patch and the Croatian national badge on the left arm below the SS eagle.



Divisional signs.

38th SS Panzer-Grenadier Division 'Nibelungen'

FORMED in 1945 from a cadre of staff and students from the SS Officers' schools it included a panzer detachment and a motorised artillery regiment. It served as a battle group in the Alpine regions.

Collar patch: Not known.

Cuff title: None known.
Note: It is likely that as the members of the cadre of this division came from the schools some may have worn collar patches, arm shields and cuff titles of their original unit.

Most of these later divisions were only nominally so titled and never reached full strength. Ten other formations were also proposed but were never raised. Their titles were to be 'Gebirgsdivision'; 'Andreas Höfer'; SS Freiwilligen Panzer-Grenadier Division 'Feldherrnhalle'; Finnisches Battalion 'Kalevala'; SS Division 'Neidersachsen'; SS Panzer Division 'Reichsmarshall'; SS Panzer-Grenadier Division 'Wallenstein'; Germanisches SS Division 'Warager'. It should be noted that in 1939-40, Waffen SS Divisions were identified by their titles only, 'Das Reich', etc; but by 1942 with the re-organisations and expansions occurring continually, it became necessary to regularise the position and divisional formations were numbered consecutively. Elite German Divisions had the prefix 'SS', ethnic German divisions 'SS Freiwilligen Division' while Eastern and Foreign formations were titled 'Waffen Grenadier Division der SS . . .'.

A 7·5cm Leichte Infanteriegeschutze 18 (light infantry gun) of a Waffen-SS infantry gun company in action on the Russian Front, summer 1942 (IWM-STT3081).

THE BRIGADES OF MISCELLANEOUS FORMATIONS

MANY of the aforementioned divisions were expanded from brigade formations and some reverted back to a mere brigade strength before the end of the war.

1st SS (Motor) Infanterie Brigade, included 'Totenkopf' Regiments 8 and 10.

2nd SS (Motor) Infanterie Brigade, included 'Totenkopf' Regiments Nos 4 and 5.

2nd SS Sturm Brigade 'Dirlewanger', comprised the Penal Regiments 'Dirlewanger' Nos 1 and 2.

2nd SS Sturm Brigade 'Flandern'.

2nd Freiwilligen Infanterie Brigade 'Lettisches'.

3rd Freiwilligen Infanterie Brigade 'Estnisches'.

4th SS Freiwilligen Panzer-Grenadier Brigade 'Niederland' which included the SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'General Seyffardt' No 48, and the SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiment 'De Ruyter' No 49.

5th SS Freiwilligen Sturm Brigade 'Wallonie'.

6th SS Freiwilligen Sturm Brigade 'Langemarck'.

6th SS Freiwilligen Sturm Brigade 'Charlemagne' (later retitled the 7th Waffen Grenadier Sturm Brigade).

7th Waffen-SS Grenadier Sturm Brigade 'Frankreich'.

25th and 26th SS Panzer-Grenadier Brigades.

27th SS Sturm Brigade 'Langemarck'.

44th Waffen-SS Grenadier Brigade 'Italien'.

49th Waffen-SS Grenadier Brigade.

51st Waffen-SS Panzer-Grenadier Brigade.

SS Sturm Brigade 'RFSS'.

SS Brigade 'Kaminski'.

The latter was formed as an irregular militia under the command of a renegade Russian engineer Bronislav Kaminski, who was given the SS rank of Oberführer. Recruited largely from ex-Russian P.O.W. and renegade Ukranians, it reached a strength of 7,000 men and was equipped with artillery and captured tanks. The brigade took part under Brigadeführer Stroop in the suppression of the Warsaw uprising along with the 'Dirlewanger' Brigade where the excesses perpetrated against the Poles and Jews were so horrific that the unit was withdrawn and disbanded. Kaminski was later assassinated.

Collar patch: Plain black but may possibly have been as 29th (Russian No 1). The unit appeared to have worn a mixture of Russian and German dress.

Armshield: Dark green with gold letters 'POHA' across top and a semi-circle bearing a black cross over crossed swords.

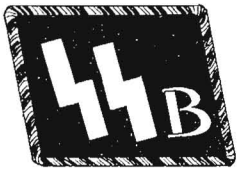
Waffen SS Schools and Academies

FROM the original Junkerschule 'Bad Tölz' and 'Braunschweig', the Artzlische Academie and the Uterführerschulen 'Lauernberg' and 'Radolfzell', many other establishments were raised during the course of the war. The eventual list included 55 Schools and Academies, to which can be added the various Wehrmacht instructional establishments to which Waffen-SS were sent when training facilities were unavailable elsewhere.

Collar patches.

Left: SS-Schule 'Bad Tolz'.

Right: SS-Schule 'Braunschweig' (pre-1940)



Einsatzgruppen (Action groups or Special Duty Commandos)

FOUR groups, A, B, C, and D, including Sonderkommando 'Ohlendorf', were formed by Himmler before the invasion of Russia. Known to the Russians as Murder Commandos, or Extermination Squads, they comprised some 3,000 men under the direct control of the RSHA and officered by SD Gestapo, and Kriminalpolizei officers. Some rank and file were drawn from Ordnungspolizei and 'Totenkopf' elements, and selected Waffen-SS criminals. Posting to these units was considered a punishment regularly given to Waffen-SS personnel charged with disciplinary offences. These units were also known as 'Einsatzkommandos' or 'Sonderkommandos'.

Collar patch: Probably plain black with police type shoulder straps worn by the SD personnel.

The Waffen-SS included many small, often short-lived, units under its command, far too many to enumerate in this work. Anyone wishing to research further into the subject are referred to the exhaustive study by Wolf Keilig *Das Deutsches Heers* and *Der Waffen-SS-Ein Dokumentation* by Dr Klietmann. However, units that should be mentioned are:

SS Festungsregiment No 1 'Besslein'.
SS Bewahrungsverbände 500.
SS Jägdverbände 'Mitte'.
SS Fallschirmjäger Bataillon.
Osttürkischer Waffenverbände der SS.

(*Collar patch:* Wolf's head or spear and shield. *Cuff title:* Green lettered white.)

Kaukasischer Waffenbände der SS.
Serbischer SS Freiwilligen Korps.

Waffen Grenadier Regiment der SS (Rumanian No 1) .
Waffen Grenadier Regiment der SS (Rumanian No 2).
Waffen Grenadier Regiment der SS (Bulgarian No 1).

SS Cossack Cavalry Corps (formed from the two Cossack Wehrmacht Cavalry Divisions). This formation came under Waffen-SS jurisdiction in September 1944. Although administered by the 'SS-Führungshauptamt' it should be noted that the Cossacks were never made members of the SS and at no time wore SS insignia, but retained the full Wehrmacht uniform with their own peculiar Cossack distinctions. Their units had no Waffen-SS personnel on their strength. The full story of the Cossack cavalry in the German Army is a study in itself and does not come within the scope of this work.

Waffen Gebirgs Brigade der SS (Tartar No 1) which was apparently an earlier title for the Osttürkischer Waffenverbände der SS.

Norwegien SS Ski-Jäger Battalion (later incorporated in the 6th Division).

Indisches Freiwilligen Legion der SS

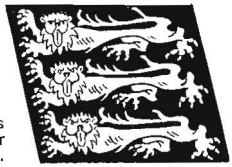
RAISED in 1942 under the leadership of Subhas Chandra Bose as a Wehrmacht unit it was recruited from Indian prisoners of war captured in Africa and Italy, and transferred to the Waffen-SS in 1944 but although fully clothed and equipped it saw no action. German uniforms were worn but the wearing of the 'lungi' (turban) was optional.

Collar patch: Tiger's head.

Cuff title: None.

Armshield: Orange, white and green horizontal stripes—leaping Tiger —'FREIES INDIEN' in black on a white panel above.

Left: Indische Freiwilligen Legion, collar patch.



Right: Britisches Freikorps collar patch.

Britisches Freikorps (Also known as the Legion St. George)

RECRUITED from British POWs it only reached a nominal strength of approximately 60 men. No information can be traced as to its activities.

Collar patch: Three lions or leopards.

Cuff title: 'BRITISCHE FREIKORPS'

Armshield: British flag.

One source states that this unit wore British uniform with some German influences such as badges and headdress but a rare photograph in a private collection examined by the writers reveals that a full Wehrmacht uniform was worn with Einheitsmütze and trousers with gaiters.

SS Kriegsberichter Standarte 'Kurt Eggers' ('War Correspondents')

Cuff title: 'SS Kriegsberichter' and
'Kurt Eggers' plus divisional title if attached.

Personal escort and guard units acting for Hitler and Himmler were:

(a) 'Wachbataillon' (Motorised) L.A.H.

(b) 'Begleitbataillon' (Motorised) 'Rechführer SS'

and by 1945 there were twelve other guard battalions (Wach Bataillonen) and five guard companies (Wach Kompagnien) distributed throughout the Third Reich.

Note: An American 'Freikorps' known as the 'George Washington Legion' is alleged to have been raised. One or two individuals may have served in the Waffen-SS but whether as a group has not been confirmed.

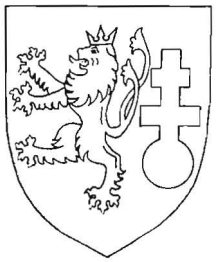
31st SS Freiwilligen Panzer Grenadier Division 'Böhmen-Mähren'

ALSO referred to by the title 31st SS Freiwilligen Grenadier Division (and without the title) this division was raised in early 1945 around a nucleus of 'Volkdeutsche' staff from the various 'lehr' units and Waffen SS schools situated in the vicinity of the former Austro-Hungarian provinces of Bohemia (Böhmen) and Moravia (Mähren). The personnel other than those from the training establishments and SS schools were almost entirely German speaking Hungarians and Czechs. The division never reached more than a large Brigade strength but included SS Panzer-Grenadier Regiments 78, 79 and 80 together with reconnaisance, artillery, assault gun, artillery, engineer and signal detachments with the number 31.

Collar patch: Not confirmed but probably SS runes.

Cuff title: 'Böhmen-Mähren'.

Armshield: Not confirmed.



Divisional sign.

Variant.

Part 2: The Uniforms

ALTHOUGH this book is primarily concerned with the wartime service of the Waffen-SS, some mention should be made of the black walking out dress and parade dress of the SS-VT.

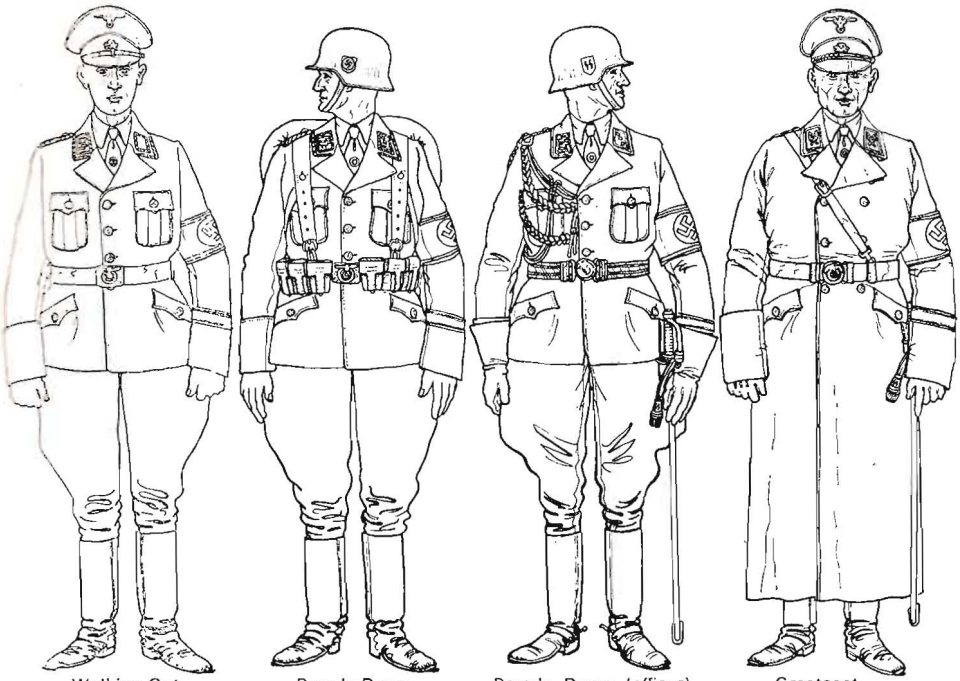
Briefly this dress comprised a black tunic, breeches or trousers (with white piping for walking out dress), black peaked cap or steel helmet, brown shirt (white for officers on parade), black tie, and black overcoat. Mounted units wore breeches and boots with nickelled spurs.

The tunic was a single breasted coat with four matt grained buttons down the front, two patch pockets on the breasts, two slit pockets in the skirts cut on the slant with flaps, and a single vent in the centre to the waist at the rear with a button either side at waist level. Cuffs were deep and round. The right shoulder only had a black and silver grey cord strap on black underlay for troopers and NCOs, and silvered cord on black underlay for officers. SS regimental insignia was worn on a collar patch on the right of the collar, the rank on the left. The edge of the collar and collar patches were trimmed with a black and silver mixture cord for troopers and NCOs, and aluminium wire for officers. On the left arm, just above the cuff the regimental, or unit, cuff title was worn. The red, black-edged arm band (Hakenkreuzarmbinde) bearing the black swastika in a white circle was worn on the left upper arm. No sleeve eagle was worn on this jacket. Black riding-type breeches were worn with jack boots, or trousers (with white piping) and black shoes for social occasions.

The peaked cap was black with white piping around the crown, and above and below the cap band for other ranks, and with aluminium pipings for officers. The cap band was black velvet for officers. The cap carried the SS eagle and swastika (Hoheitsabzeichen) on the front of the crown, and the Death's Head (Totenkopf) on the cap band. Chin straps were ornamental twisted aluminium for officers but plain black leather for NCOs and troopers. A small silver matt grained button either side fastened the chinstrap to the cap. The small visor was black plastic.

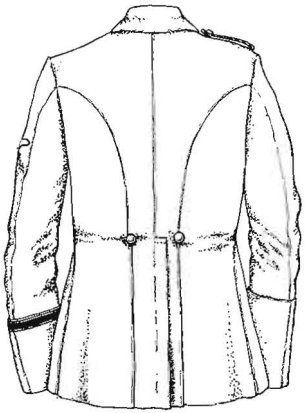
The greatcoat was long and reached below calf length. It was double breasted with two rows of six matt silver, grained, buttons and had deep round cuffs. The pockets were slit diagonally either side of the skirts with rectangular flaps. A central vent to the waist with a fly and four small buttons and a half belt with two buttons completed the back. Shoulder cords, collar patches and pipings as on the jacket. Field officers in the General officer range had pale grey linings to the lapels which would be worn open.

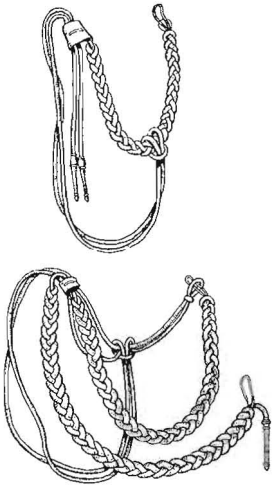
Black leather belts and equipment were worn, except for the L.A.H. who were distinguished by white leather accoutrements on 20th April



Walking Out. Parade Dress. Parade Dress (officer). Greatcoat.

The black parade dress of the SS-VT. Full colour details are given in the text opposite. Tunic is shown in detail below. The first earth grey service tunic of the SS-VT was of almost identical cut. RIGHT: Aiguilette worn by adjutants and staff officers on ceremonial occasions. LOWER RIGHT: Army pattern aiguilettes worn by SS-VT officers on parade and ceremonial occasions.





(Hitler's Birthday) and other very special occasions. Shortly before the war silver laced waistbelts and silver, dress aiguilettes were taken into wear by officers for parade occasions. The L.A.H. introduced white shirts and gloves for all ranks for ceremonial occasions and this practice was

The 1935 pattern steel helmet here shown painted black as worn for parade purposes pre-war.

followed by the other regiments at a later stage.

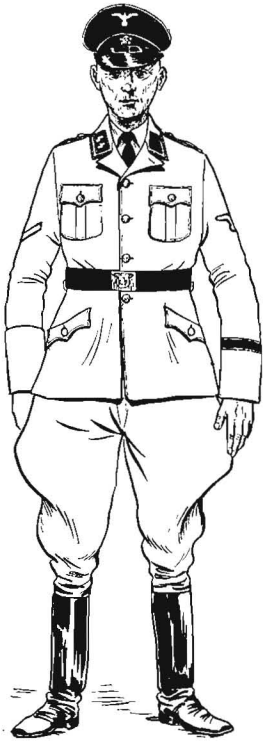
The steel helmet worn for parade was the 1916 pattern until a year or two before the outbreak of the war when the M1935 pattern was brought into use. It carried the black SS runes on a silver shield on the right side, and had a red shield bearing the white circle and swastika on the left. Officers carried the SS sword, Warrant NCOs (Portepee-unterführer) the Army style sabre and later the SS sword. Company bayonet knots were not worn, only a black and silver honour knot for selected personnel.

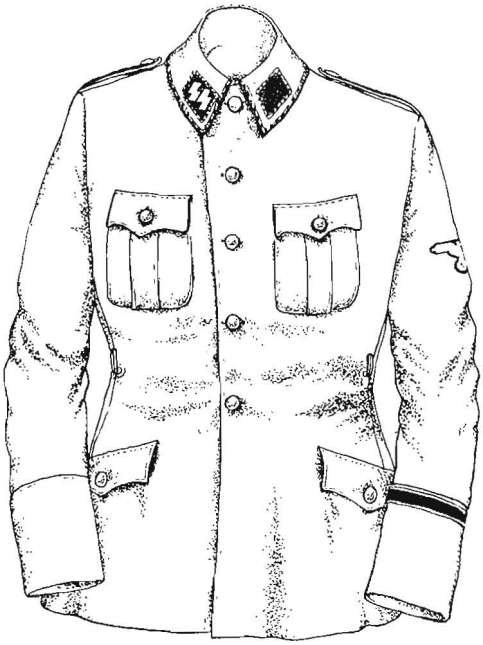
SERVICE DRESS

Tunics

The first peacetime SS-VT earth grey tunic was still being worn by some personnel in 1939 and possibly later. The coat was single breasted and fastened by five matt grey 'grained' buttons for other ranks, and could be worn either closed or open at the neck. Officers always wore

The earth grey service dress was introduced in 1935 and was of similar cut to the black parade dress but with one extra tunic button in the case of other ranks. Though replaced with a new field grey uniform from 1937, the earth grey uniform was still being worn by some troops in 1939-40.





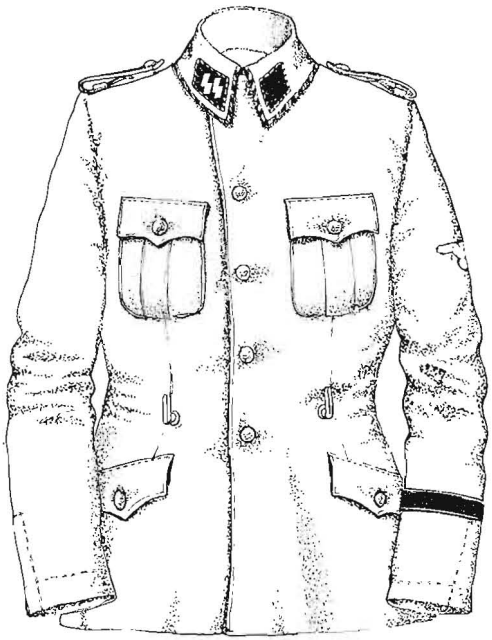
ABOVE: The sleeve eagle emblem worn by all SS-VT / Waffen-SS troops in service dress. It was woven in silver-grey thread on a black ground and was known as the Hoheitsabzeichen (national emblem). RIGHT: The earth grey service tunic in close-up showing its appearance with the top button fastening the collar. It was worn thus on active service or in inclement weather. The officers' tunic had no top button and was always worn with the collar open.

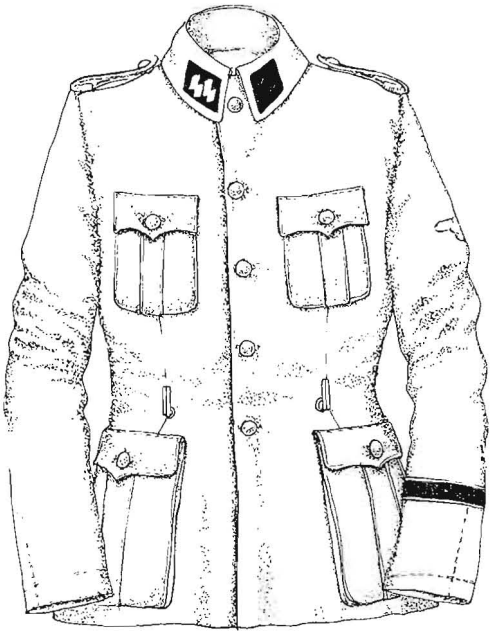
the coat open, fastened by four buttons, and with collar and tie (brown shirt at first, later a grey shirt was taken into use). There were two patch pockets on the breasts, and the skirt pockets were slit and cut diagonally, in the same style as the black parade and walking out dress (Waffenrock). The collar was grey, and cuffs were deep and round. Black, point ended, shoulder straps in army style were worn on each shoulder and were piped with the arm of service colour (Waffenfarbe). The cut of this garment was very similar in style to the Reichsheer tunic of pre-1933 vintage.

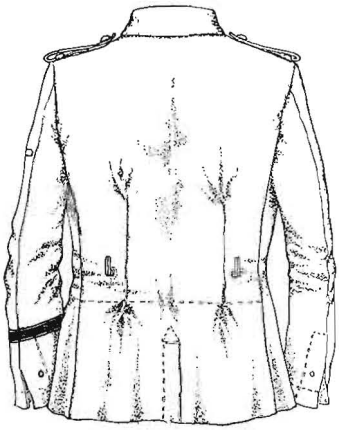
By 1939 this elegant, earth-grey tunic was being replaced by the first SS field grey blouse. The coat was again single breasted and fastened by four matt grey buttons. The grey collar was fastened by a small cloth tab and button, or hook, which enabled the coat to be worn closed at the neck during the winter months (see photograph on page 16). Patch pockets with pleats and scalloped flaps were set on each breast. The skirt pockets were slit and cut on the slant as on the earth grey tunic. The cuffs were plain and slit at the rear seam. Photographs of decorated SS personnel in early war time copies of the SS newspaper *Der SchwarzKorps* show most recipients wearing this style of coat, some without the regulation black collar patches. The rear of the coat had a small single vent in the centre of the skirt. At first the coat was decorated with black and white piping on the collar and around the patches, but this decoration was dispensed with by the middle of 1940. Shoulder straps on this particular garment were made round ended and detachable, and by 1940 officers started to take into use the army style shoulder cords to replace the General SS pattern previously worn by them. By 1939 NCOs were wearing collars and shoulder straps decorated with a wide matt silver braid. This was placed around the front and button edges of the collars,

and around the shoulder straps. Matt silver stars were also worn on the shoulder straps and chevrons beneath the distinctive SS sleeve eagle and swastika, which was worn on the left upper arm by all ranks.

The sleeve eagle* was in silver wire on black for officers, and light grey silk on black for other ranks. A number of units carried embroidered monograms on the shoulder straps, these included 'LAH', 'D' for 'Deutschland', 'G' for 'Germania' and 'DF' for 'Der Fuhrer'. The ornaments were in bronze metal for officers and white metal for NCOs. Other support







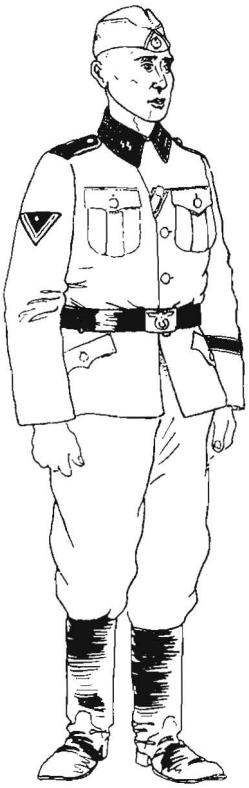
ABOVE LEFT, AND LEFT: Front and rear of the field grey service dress tunic which went on issue to the SS-VT/ Waffen-SS from 1937. This was the standard SS uniform at the outbreak of war. While simplified in cut it retained the distinctive slanted lower pockets of earlier tunics. The black and silver twist piping round the collar had been dropped by 1940. ABOVE: After the outbreak of war, with a major expansion of manpower and shortage of supplies the ordinary army pattern tunic was adopted for the Waffen-SS. By 1940 it was common issue. It had patch pockets and was supplied either with a plain collar or a dark green collar as used by the army until about 1941. OPPOSITE PAGE: The field grey SS pattern uniform. As with the earlier earth grey tunic the collar could be worn open.

* The most distinctive feature of Waffen-SS uniform was the method of wearing the special SS pattern "hoheitsabzeichen". The eagle was worn on the left upper arm and not on the right breast in the fashion of the other armed forces.

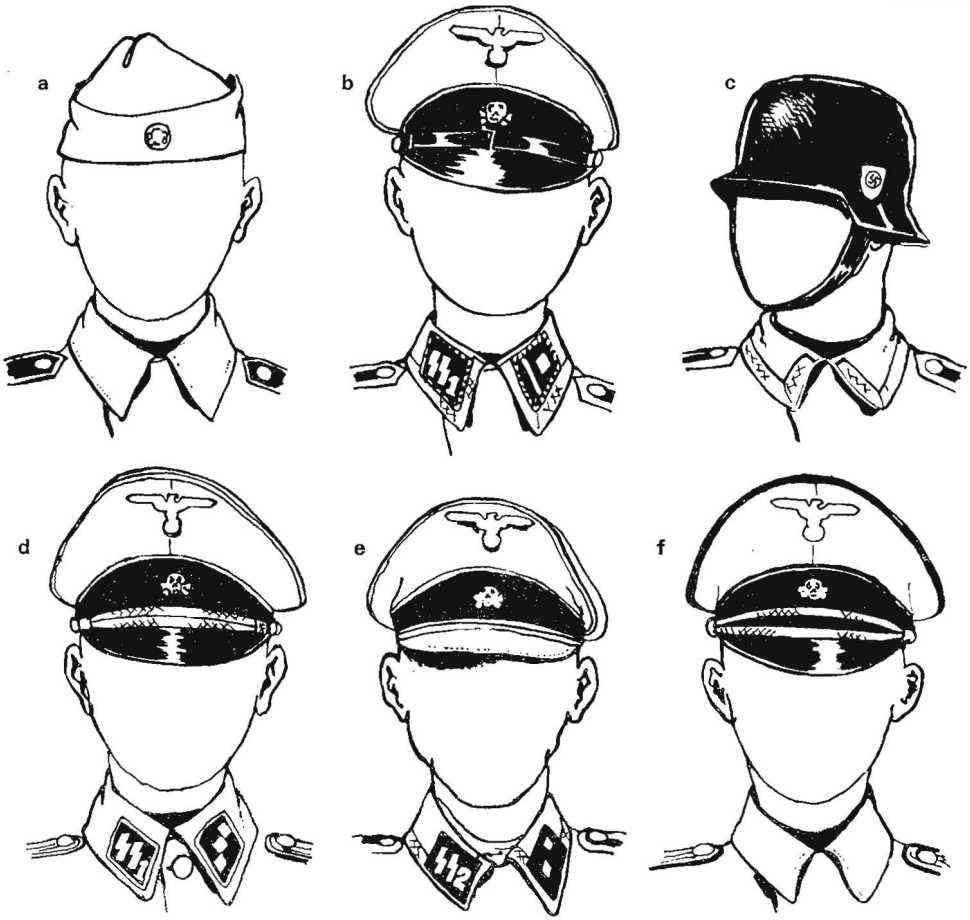
units, schools, medical services, etc, carried monograms during this early period but in the main, apart from the L.A.H. and medical services, these had been discontinued by 1943. All ranks wore black unit cuff titles which were edged with aluminium wire. The name of the unit was embroidered in grey silk for other ranks and in silver for officers. This was worn on the left arm approximately 15cm from the bottom of sleeve. Trade badges were generally worn above the cuff title on a diamond shaped piece of black cloth.

By 1940 many of the SS field blouses were being modified by having dark green collars fitted. This is confirmed by a photograph of the 'L.A.H.' in a war-time calendar, in which a group are shown wearing this particular jacket with the collar and collar patches piped with the black and white cord, nearly all having the dark collar. One or two troopers are wearing the coat with grey collars in this group and a few without any pipings, without doubt dating the photograph in the mid-1940 transitional period. The most interesting point about this particular photograph is that all the army style shoulder straps bear a metal 'L.A.H.' monogram in the centre of the strap. Officers appear to have worn two versions of this particular jacket, one in the particular SS light grey and the other in a field grey (usually lighter than the Wehrmacht shade).

As supplies became more erratic SS troops began to take army pattern tunics into wear. These had four patch pockets and a dark green collar,



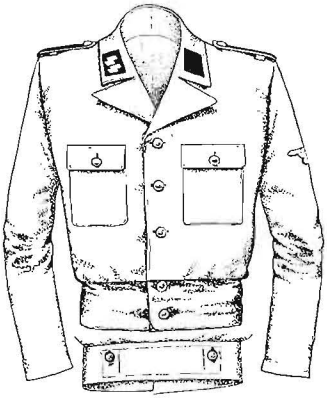
ABOVE: Officer and two privates in France in May 1940. The officer is wearing the army pattern tunic and has his forage cap tucked into his belt. The privates are wearing the 1939 pattern SS field blouse and turn back collars. No rank patches or cuff titles are worn—probably for security reasons. Note the mud-daubed helmets.



Six sketches taken from an October 1939 edition of The SS newspaper 'Schwarzes Korps'. They show the various types of head dress and collar distinctions worn in the early World War 2 campaigns. Note that figure (b) has the black and silver edging to the collar patches, that (a), (b) and (c) have point ended shoulder straps and that (e) wears the field service cap with the cloth peak. In this case the plain black collar patches are fastened to the collar over the edge of the NCO's braiding. The officer (f) has no patches on the plain grey collar and the NCO's helmet (c) is painted a gloss black.

plus deep round cuffs. The coat was single breasted and fastened by five matt grey 'grained' buttons (see photograph of Degrelle on page 39 and 'Kama' officers on page 34). Army style Hoheitsabzeichen were also sometimes worn on the sleeve in place of the distinctive SS pattern. Photographs show that on occasions officers wore coats with plain dark green collars with no patches at all.

In 1943 a simplified pattern jacket began to be issued to the SS and to the Wehrmacht. This jacket, best known by its Amercian Intelligence designation as the M1944 pattern had four patch pockets with scalloped flaps, but with no pleats. Skirt pockets were very large and extended almost to the bottom of the coat edge which was often trimmed off by soldiers to make it even shorter. The collar was plain grey and could, as



ABOVE: Tunic and equipment of a Rottenführer of artillery (red waffenfarbe), 2nd SS Panzer Division 'Das Reich'. This is the army style jacket with patch pockets on the skirts and plain slit cuffs. Belt and ammunition cases are black leather and the anti-gas respirator case is in metal painted olive green. LEFT: The new pattern field blouse issued from 1944 onwards, a much simplified garment using less material than the earlier tunics and similar to the British battledress blouse.

This view of three captured Waffen-SS officers in May 1945 shows the three variations of service dress then commonly worn. The Untersturmführer (left) is in the new 1944 pattern field blouse, a much simplified garment inspired largely by the British battle dress and the need to economise on material. The Sanitätsdienste Untersturmführer (medical officer) in the centre, wears the so-called M1944 tunic (introduced in 1943) with plain collar, plain unpleated pockets, and the medical specialist serpent badge on his epaulettes. The Sanitätsdienste Obersturmführer (right) wears the earlier pattern army tunic and has his medical badge on the cap front as well as on his epaulettes—probably an unofficial position (IWM-BU7028).

as usual, be worn open or closed.

Late in 1944 a further style jacket appeared. This resembled the M1944 pattern but was cut very short at the waist like British battle-dress with patch pockets in blouse style. It was fastened by six buttons, and as with the other tunics the collar could be worn open or closed.

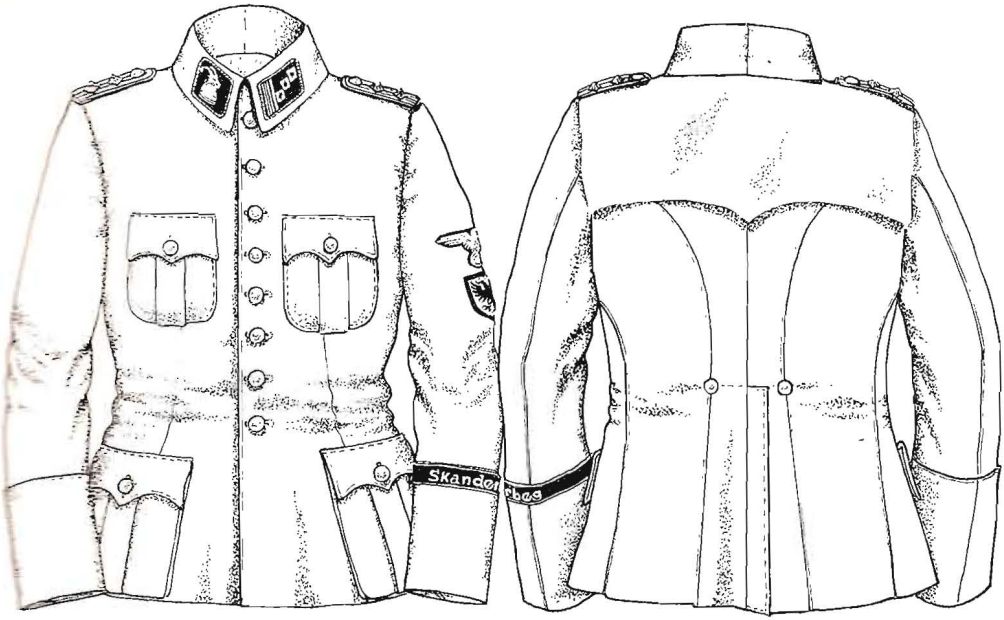
Examples are known of senior SS officers having tunics custom made with gold embroidery, rather than the normal silver embellishments. The coats of the senior officers had bright metal buttons.

Summer Tunics

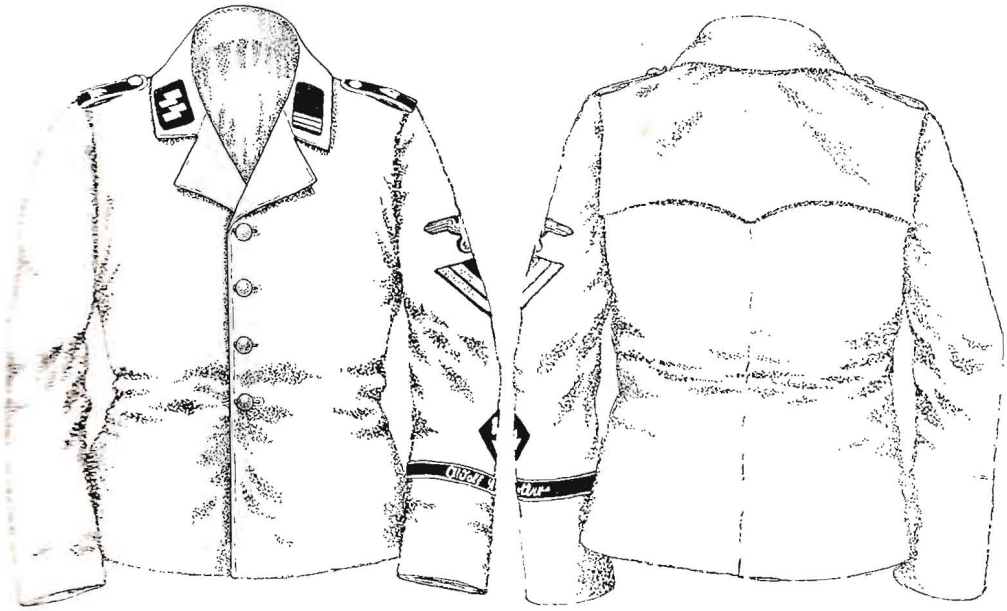
Elite units were issued with white tunics for summer wear. These were four buttoned coats with very short skirts and no pockets. The tunic could be worn open or closed at the neck. Black shoulder straps, collar patches, and cuff titles were worn as on the normal jackets. Officers' coats had pockets on the breast and skirts, and the front of coat was fastened by eight metal buttons. Collar patches, shoulder straps, and cuff titles were worn as on the normal jacket and the coat had a yoke across the shoulders to offer extra ease of movement.

Tropical Tunic and Dress

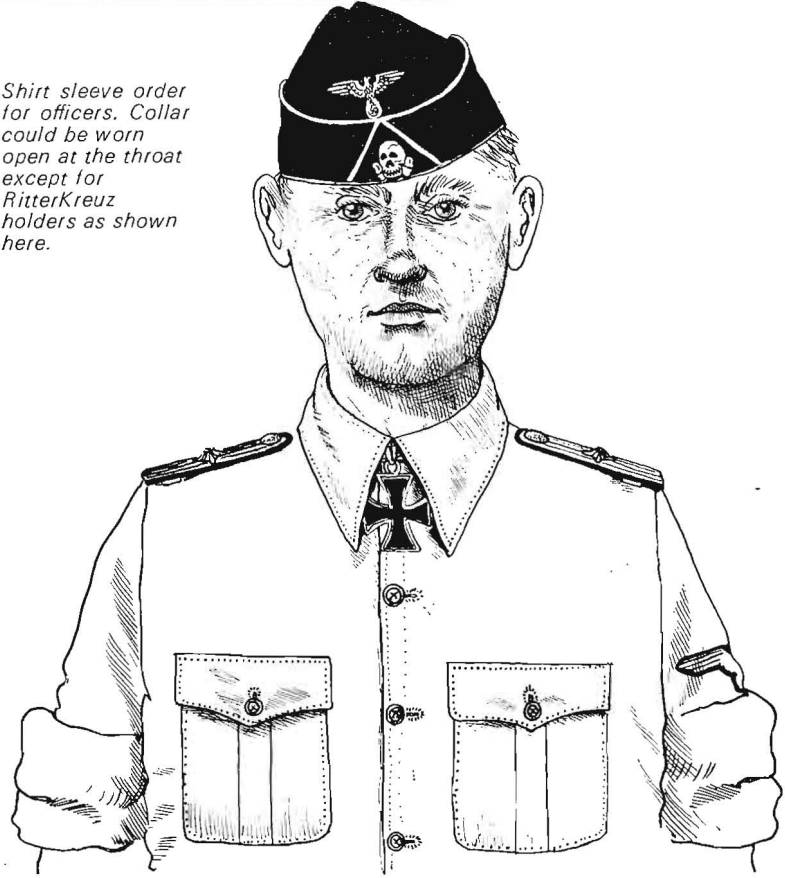
This coat was made from a cotton sand-brown twill and was cut like the standard army tunic issued to the Afrika Korps. It could be worn open at the neck, with or without collars and ties. In this case the sleeve eagle was yellow silk on a black ground. The coat was worn by some SS troops



ABOVE: Front and rear views of officer's white summer tunic. This was of unlined drill material and had a double shoulder yoke. Standard badges and insignia were were worn.



ABOVE: Front and rear of NCO's and other ranks' white summer tunic. Note the double shoulder yoke.



Shirt sleeve order for officers. Collar could be worn open at the throat except for RitterKreuz holders as shown here.

in Southern Russia, Greece and Italy.

In summer officers could wear a grey shirt with shoulder cords and sleeve eagle. The shirt was worn with open neck except for RitterKreuz wearers in which case the collar was closed. (See photograph of SS-Obersturmführer Karl Kloskowski in 'RitterKreuzträger der Waffen-SS'.)

A light weight unlined 'reed green' coloured fatigue tunic was also worn and was sometimes utilised as warm weather clothing.

AFV Crews and Motor Cyclists

Tank crews wore a special black clothing designed to enable the wearer to more easily negotiate climbing in and out of vehicles. They also tended to make oil and grease stains less noticeable. The jacket was short, double breasted and made from thick cloth. It had a fly front and could be worn open or buttoned across at the neck. In 1939-40, Waffen-SS jackets for armoured personnel had bright pink waffenfarbe on the collar and collar patches, but later photographs show no piping. Officers had a matt silver piping around the collar and NCOs of the L.A.H. at least had NCO lace on the collar. Loose black trousers were also worn and fastened at the ankle. These trousers had pockets on the thigh which were set on diagonally and had rounded scalloped button-up flaps. In

RIGHT: Camouflage suit, 1944 issue, was made of cheap coarse drill material but followed the cut and style of the Army pattern tunic. It was issued in several different camouflage patterns, this one being the 'brick' pattern for predominantly built-up areas. Note unofficial wearing of badges on sleeve.

LEFT: Artillery Kanonier, 1944, wearing the one-piece camouflage overall suit, summer pattern camouflage. This overall suit was also issued to tank and self-propelled gun crews. The SS eagle was sometimes worn on the left sleeve, though this was not official.

Waffen-SS panzer troops in 1940 wearing the black combination suit issued to tank crews. They also have the panzer beret which was replaced in 1940 by the forage cap for wear in tanks. Except for the standard positioning of collar patches and national insignia this dress was the same as that worn by army tank units (IWM-JMH125).

the early part of the war light laced shoes were worn, but these were soon dropped for half boots. Tank officers are seen at the latter part of the war wearing short leather jackets, both with and without collars. Cuffs are buttoned close to the wrist.

From 1942 a special grey protective clothing was issued to personnel of armoured vehicles other than tank crews. This was identical in cut to the black clothing. A one-piece 'boiler suit' tank overall of camouflaged material was also worn.

A special long rubber coat was issued to motor cyclists and drivers, cut so that it could be adapted to wear in a variety of ways—it had a dark green cloth collar and black shoulder straps. The colour was field grey.

Camouflaged Clothing

From very early in the war, Waffen-SS troops could be most readily identified by their special pattern, camouflaged smock and helmet covers (fastened with metal clips). Designed in mottle patterns to correspond

A contrast in uniform styles which shows the typical variety common within one unit. The Unterscharführer on the left wears the 'reed green' fatigue or tropical tunic which was made of light weight twill. The Sturmann on the right wears the normal army pattern tunic in field grey. Note the scruffy manner in which the collar patches are affixed.

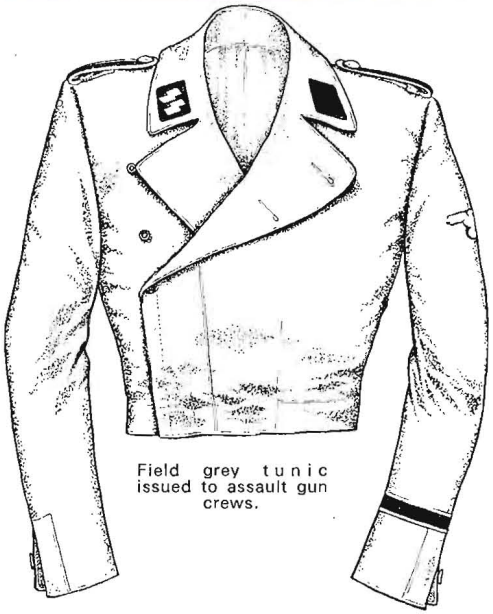
with the type of terrain, or season of the year (see colour charts on page 80), the clothing was reversible, with a predominance of green in the pattern for spring and summer, brown and pink on the reverse sides for autumnal periods. A special summer 'leaf and foliage' pattern was also worn. The smock was collarless, and laced at the neck. Cuffs were normally elasticated, and the smock had two slits which were cut into each side to enable the wearer to reach into the pockets of the garment worn beneath. The smock had various loops sewn in to facilitate the carrying of sprigs of leaves and bracken. Later versions were made with pockets fastened by small buttons. Invariably tunic collars were worn outside the smock. A special system of rank identification was devised

RIGHT: Oberscharführer of the 'Langemarck' division, 1943. He is wearing the camouflage smock autumn pattern outwards. Note the sleeve rank badges and the loops for attachment of foliage.

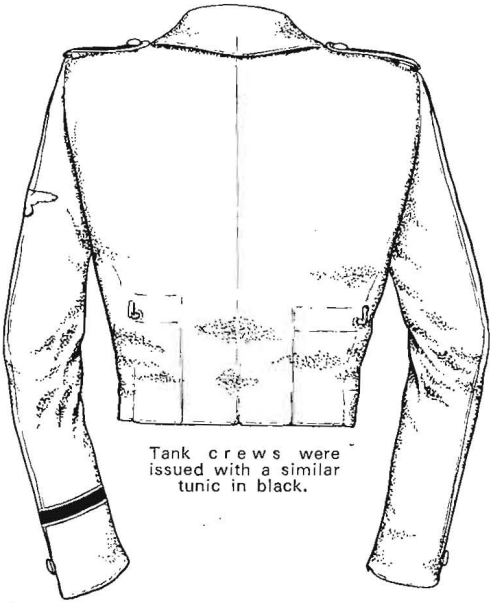
LEFT: Unterstürmführer of an SS parachute battalion. The Luftwaffe pattern parachute smock was made of Waffen-SS pattern material, in this case spring pattern. SS cuff titles were sometimes worn in the usual way and rank badges were often worn on the sleeves.

LEFT: Hauptstürmführer of a Waffen-SS Aufklärung (reconnaissance) unit wearing the waterproof coat issued to motorcyclists and drivers in reconnaissance units. Note that epaulettes were usually —but not always—worn with this coat.

RIGHT: The white reversible winter uniform worn here by a senior NCO. The Autumn pattern camouflage finish can be seen on the inside of the hood. He also wears a toque and a service cap. The winter boots are made of felt and leather.



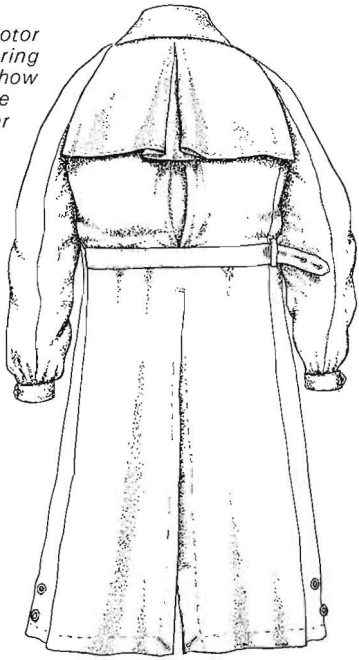
Field grey tunic issued to assault gun crews.



Tank crews were issued with a similar tunic in black.

ABOVE, LEFT: The field grey combination suit issued to assault gun personnel. Except for its colour it was identical to the black suit issued to tank crews and shown on page 66. These men are from L.A.H. whose title they wear as slip-overs on the shoulder straps. Note the collar patches removed, in the case of one man. Rank shown is Rottenführer. ABOVE RIGHT: Two SS officers captured at Normandy, one with camouflaged smock tucked into trousers and the other with the long rubber motor-cyclists' waterproof (IWM-B6009). BELOW: Men of a reconnaissance unit in France, May 1940, wearing the long rubber waterproof coat with shoulder straps (IWM-MH9218).

ABOVE: The crew of a heavy motor cycle combination shown wearing the long waterproof coats. Note how they are gathered in round the cuffs and legs and the shoulder straps carrying rank insignia (IWM-MH9402).

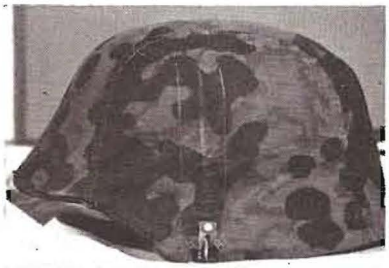


Front and rear of the waterproof rubber coat which was issued to motor cyclists and vehicle drivers.

RIGHT: SS-Signals specialist in drill tropical uniform (lemon yellow Waffenfarben) with specialist cuff badge. This uniform had a greenish tinge when new, which soon washed out to give a neutral shade.

LEFT: Supply and technical officer (light blue Waffenfarben) wearing the green leather overcoat with 'Afrika' campaign title. The epaulettes were not always worn with this coat. Cap has stiffener removed. The cuff title detail is confirmed from a photograph but is a rare instance.

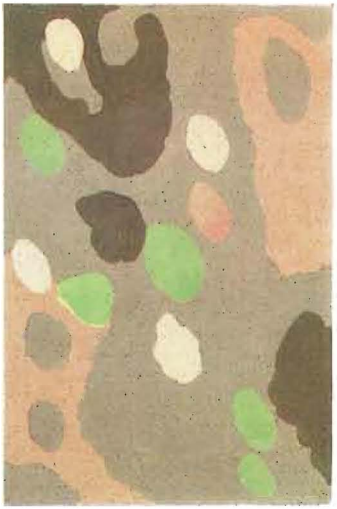
Examples of the Legion Armshields (Landschilde) worn by Waffen-SS foreign contingents.



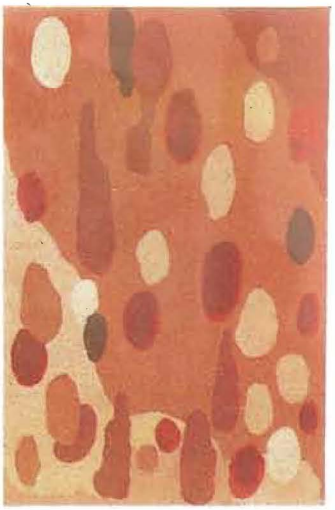
TOP: Mortar crew in camouflage smocks and helmet covers (IWM-STT5095). ABOVE: Close view of helmet camouflage cover—note the stitched panels. LEFT: Another contrast in styles. Two Obersturmführer of the L.A.H. in Italy, 1943. One wears the SS pattern field grey tunic over tropical shirt and shorts while the other is in army pattern tunic and wearing ankle boots (IWM).

A close view of the camouflage smock worn by the Waffen-SS. It was collarless and the tunic collar folded down over the neck of the smock so that the rank of the wearer was still apparent. Shown is a Rottenführer. The lace-up front and side slits were a distinctive feature. The ends of the elasticated cuffs usually partly concealed the wrists as shown, but they were frequently tucked up under the cuffs of the tunic. This smock was issued in various camouflage patterns as shown in the colour plates.

for the smock in 1943 for all ranks above Unterscharführer. This was a system of bars and oakleaves printed on a black rectangle and worn about 10 cm below the shoulder of the left arm. Ranks up to corporal wore the normal chevrons as on the field grey tunic. However, the order was not strictly adhered to, and photographs reveal that other SS distinctions such as sleeve eagles were being worn unofficially on camouflaged clothing. Trousers and a simple version of the mountain or ski cap were also made of camouflaged material (see separate heading). A camouflaged and hooded parka fitted with a drawstring at the waist was also issued.

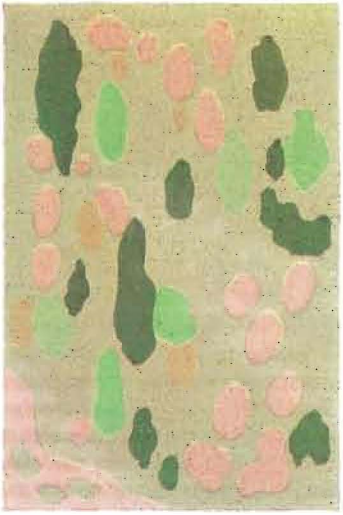


SPRING



'BRICK'

The patterns shown were painted directly from examples of actual clothing items in the collection of the Imperial War Museum, London and the Theodor Hartmann Collection.

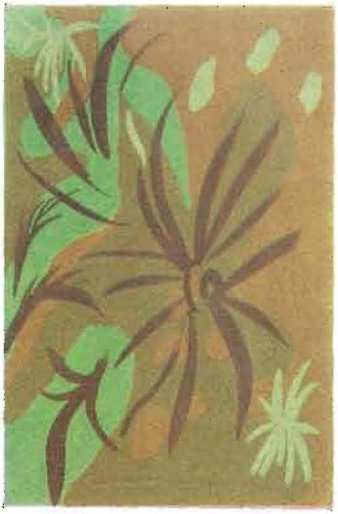


SPRING

AUTUMN (FALL)

Examples of seasonal variations in patterns used on Waffen-SS camouflage clothing (e.g. smocks).

SUMMER



SUMMER (FOREST)

In the case of reversible garments (e.g. smocks, caps) a different contrasting pattern appeared on each side.

SUMMER

AUTUMN (FALL)

Examples of seasonal variations in patterns used on Waffen-SS camouflage clothing (e.g. smocks).

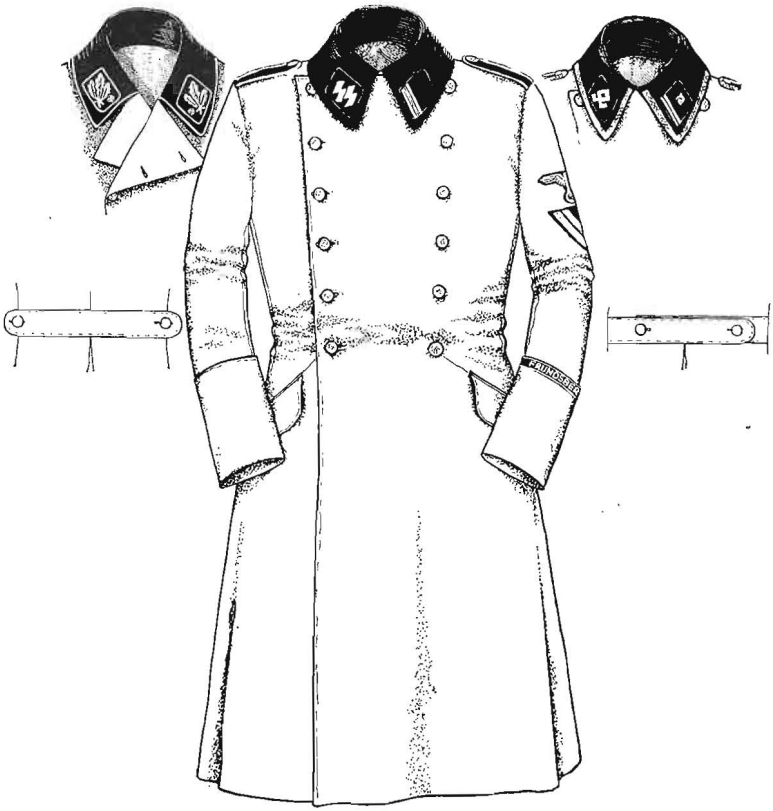
A Waffen-SS infantry Sturmann in May 1940 wearing camouflage smock and helmet cover and well loaded with equipment and weapons. Compare the camouflage pattern with the totally different pattern shown on page 75. This man appears to wear the SS pattern field grey tunic of which only the grey collar—less patches—is visible.

Later in the war suits of jackets and trousers were issued in camouflaged material made of cheap low quality drill. These were similar in cut to the M1944 pattern tunic, and no collar patches, shoulder straps, or sleeve eagles were supposed to have been worn on the garments, but this was often disregarded. Special camouflaged clothing for snipers consisting of a jacket, trousers, and specially designed gauntlets was also issued, coloured in a predominance of pink and light brown to mingle with the rubble of destroyed buildings. Towards the end of the war a green embroidered SS sleeve eagle was issued for wear with the camouflaged clothing. Instances are known where the double breasted armoured personnel jacket and loose trousers were worn, made wholly from camouflaged material.

ABOVE: A close view of the tunic of the 1944 issue camouflage suit. This was of inferior quality, cut very closely to save cloth, and made of drill material. Insignia of any kind was officially banned from this suit, but the Waffen-SS national emblem was usually worn on the arm. Unofficial addition to this tunic is the Rottenführer arm badge. The matching camouflage gauntlets were issued to units for wear by snipers. PAGE 81: This page shows the 1944 issue camouflage suit in use. The first three men in the upper picture wear the suit but the figure right foreground is in the camouflaged smock and wears a sweat rag (IWM-EA36687). BOTTOM LEFT: is a NCO during the Ardennes offensive, late 1944, wearing a complete 1944 issue camouflage suit, plus map case, entrenching tool and camouflage shelter quarter (IWM-EA48002). BOTTOM RIGHT: The complete suit is seen from behind. Note the British style anklets, commonly worn with ankle boots by the 1944 period (IWM-BU7032).

LEFT, BELOW: Standard bearer of 1st Battalion, Standarte 3, 'Der Fuhrer' in 1938-39.

BELOW: Men of the SS-Pioniersturmbann (engineer detachment) in France in 1940. The centre man wears the old earth grey service dress with shoulder straps omitted, while the other men are in field grey Army pattern uniform.



The Waffen-SS greatcoat was field grey with grey metal buttons and a very dark green collar. Early versions of the officers' coats had the special strap across the rear of the waist. Later in the war, coats with plain grey collars were issued.

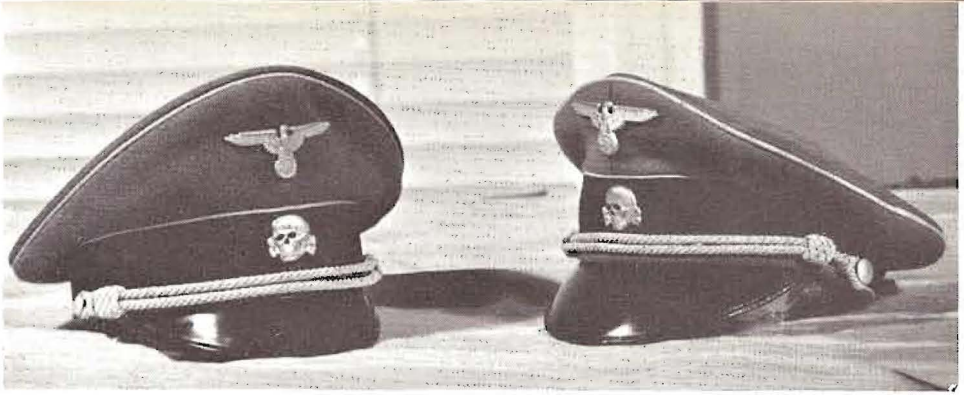
Field Grey Overcoat

The field grey overcoat was double breasted and had two rows of grey 'grained' buttons and had a dark green collar with silver piping for officers. The usual patches were worn on the collar together with the black and silver grey piping until 1940. Shoulder straps and officers' shoulder cords were also worn. General officers continued to have lapels of light grey facing cloth on their overcoats which were worn open or closed at the neck. Sleeve eagles and cuff titles were worn on the overcoat. Towards the end of the war overcoats of other ranks were issued with plain grey collars. Overcoats with deep fur collars were very much in fashion for officers of high rank during the winter months. Custom-made dark grey/green leather greatcoats were worn by many officers, many having cloth or velvet collars. They varied in design, but generally had two rows of six matt grey buttons. Rank insignia was carried on the shoulders, but it appears that collar patches were not generally worn on this leather garment. Cuff titles were also not usually worn with this coat but sometimes appeared.

ABOVE: An SS unit in Russia in 1943 showing the huge variety of styles of anoraks and parkas worn to combat the severe weather (IWM - STT 5649). RIGHT: Reversible anorak with spring pattern outside and plain white inside (Theodor Hartmann). LEFT: Typical anorak.

Anoraks and Parkas

These garments were either white and fur lined, field grey, or tan reversible to white, and were issued in several weights. As mentioned under the section on camouflaged clothing, they were also made from the camouflaged material. The necessity of combating the abnormally severe winter climates experienced in Russia led to a number of improvisations for cold weather clothing. These included sleeveless jerkins made from rabbit skins, quilted and pile jackets of many styles and also heavy, long, sheepskin coats for sentry duty. A variety of fur caps mostly of Russian or Finnish origin were also worn and large overboots of felt or basket work were issued for sentry duty.



Two patterns of Waffen-SS officers' cap. On left is a general officer's cap with aluminium piping. On the right is a field officer's cap with white piping. Of interest on the latter cap is the binding of the peak in leather, a style much favoured by the officers of the Dutch SS (Marrion/ Milner collections).

Head Dress

The Waffen-SS uniform peaked caps were field grey with a black cloth band, black velvet for General Officers. The peak, or visor, was black plastic. NCOs had a black leather chin strap with two sliders. Officers' caps had a double aluminium cord ('cordel') with two cord sliders and were fastened by two small silver matt grained buttons. For NCOs the chinstrap was fastened to the cap by a small black button on either side. The cap was piped around the crown, and above and below the cap band

A captured NCO wearing the NCO pattern service cap and the 1944 camouflaged jacket over the reed green fatigue/ summer lightweight tunic (IWM-OWIL52255).

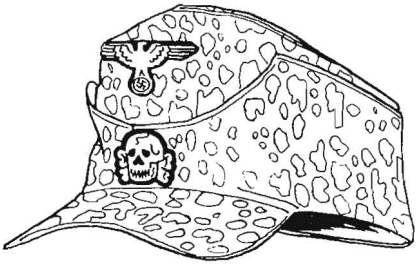
Badges and Head Wear; (top row, from left to right) officer's metal cap badge; woven badge for forage cap; officer's metal death's head badge for service cap; woven death's head badge for forage cap, etc; woven badge for einheitsmütze forage cap; einheitsmütze showing badge in position.

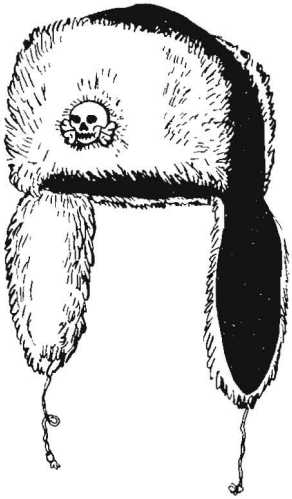
in waffenfarbe, General Officers having the pipings in aluminium cord. The SS eagle was worn at the front in the centre of the crown, the Totenkopf beneath this on the cap band. On campaign this style headdress was often worn with the wire stiffening removed and also on occasions without chinstrap, or cords, or buttons. As a result the crown became loose and a number of jaunty methods of wearing the cap were adopted. NCOs had service caps with field grey visors. Gottlob Berger appears in a photograph taken during the Polish campaign, 1939, wearing the officers' cap with a broad leather chinstrap.

The first grey field service cap worn initially with the earth grey clothing and by some personnel until after 1939 had a simple one-piece turn up decorated with a grey Totenkopf button on the front.

The subsequent field service cap, which was similar in style to the British side cap of the period, but worn squarer on the head was field grey and was first issued with the large, matt grey, button with the Totenkopf embossed on it. This was still worn in the centre of the lower, turned up, part of the cap, and it had, in addition, the SS eagle in grey silk on a black triangular patch worn on the left side of the cap. The button does not appear to have lasted long, and was soon replaced by a large machine embroidered Totenkopf in fine aluminium wire or grey embroidery on a black ground. A strip of waffenfarbe taking the form of an inverted chevron enclosed the Totenkopf. In 1942 the waffenfarbe was ordered to be removed from the cap but both patterns were worn at the same time. The officers' field service caps were decorated with a fine aluminium cord around the top and the eagle was machine embroidered with silver thread.

A black version of this cap was worn by tank crews from 1941 onwards but prior to this a large black cloth beret was worn with large embroidered



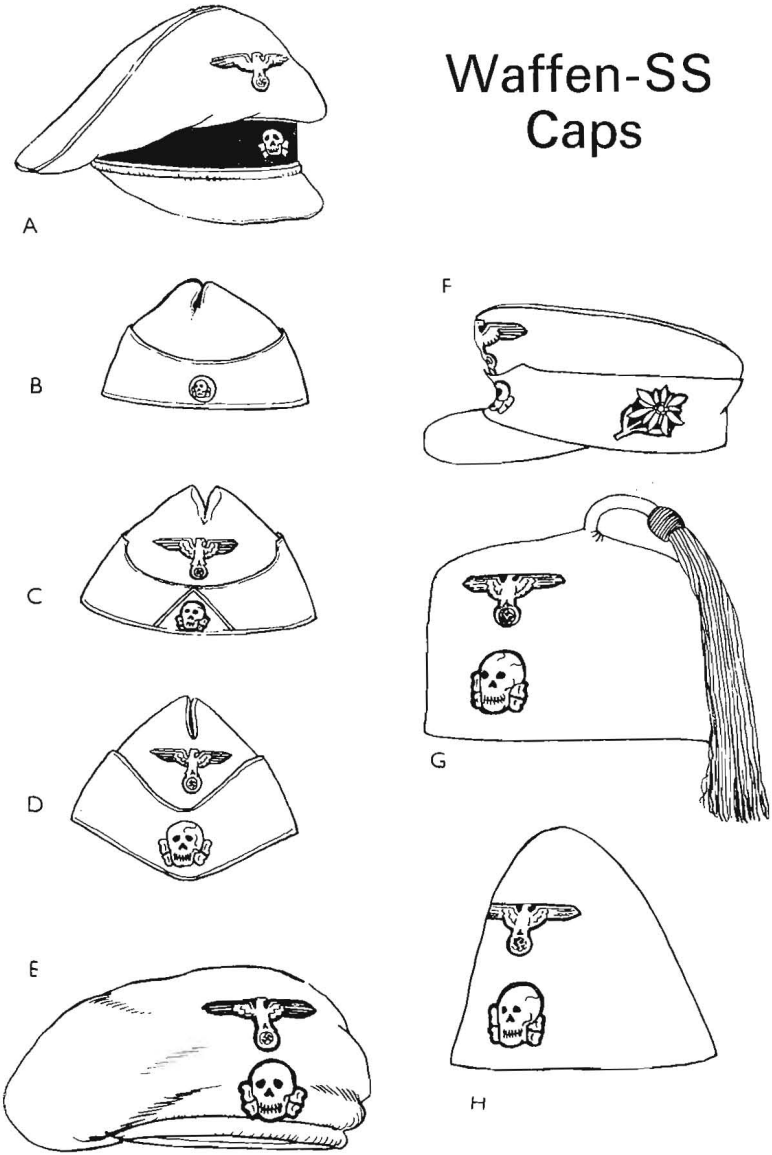


death's head and SS eagle badges over a close fitted small crash helmet.

In 1943 a new field service cap with a large cloth peak, based on the Wehrmacht mountain cap and known as the Einheitsmütze, was introduced for all ranks of the Waffen-SS on active service. This had the large scalloped flap that could be worn down over the ears, as on the earlier field service caps, but was fastened at the front by one, or two, buttons. It was decorated with the death's head and eagle badges separately or with the eagle worn on the side of the flap, or alternatively in one piece on a triangular black or grey ground at the front, above the flap. White covers were also issued with this headdress. Officers had the usual aluminium piping around the crown. Troops of the 'Prince Eugen' and 'Nord' Mountain Divisions wore a special white and yellow Edelweiss badge on a black ground on the left side of the cap. Ski Regt 'Norge' is alleged to have worn the badge on the right side.

A black version of this peaked cap was also issued to panzer units. SS Police-Regiments wore the peaked cap and field service cap with normal police insignia, ie, an eagle within an oval wreath and the national cockade worn above on the front.

Waffen-SS Caps



OPPOSITE PAGE, RIGHT: A Sturmmann wearing the Bergmütze mountain cap with the mountain troops' Edelweiss badge. He is wearing the 1944 issue field blouse (see also page 62). OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT: Camouflaged forage cap (Einheitsmütze) issued 1943 and winter fur cap, Russian Front. ABOVE: (A) NCO's field cap, 1938 pattern. (B) Earliest form of forage cap (feldmütze), 1934 issue. (C) 1940 pattern of forage cap with chevron in Waffenfarben. (D) Officer's field cap. (E) Schutzemütze for tank crews until 1940. (F) Bergmütze (mountain divisions). (G) Fez worn by 'Handschar' division. (H) Fez worn by 'Kama' division

Camouflaged Head Dress

In 1942 a camouflaged cap was authorised. This was initially quite plain, but shortly the ubiquitous SS eagle and death's head were being worn with this head dress. The cap fitted very close to the head and as with the M1943 field service cap it had a large stiffened visor of camouflaged material.

The Fez

Personnel of the 13th Division 'Handschar' and the 23rd Division 'Kama' wore three patterns of the fez and a skull cap. These were worn by Croatian and Albanian Moslem troops and the German cadre. Three patterns are known: a low field grey cap with a rounded top with a long black or bottle green tassel; a taller fez worn with a green tassel; the red fez with black tassel for officers and a lower round topped version. In some photographs personnel wear a light conical cap with or without insignia.

Steel Helmets

By 1939 the majority of the SS-VT appear to have been issued with the smaller M1935 pattern helmet. It was painted matt grey and had a silver shield with the black SS runes on the right side and the national red shield with white circle and swastika on the left. This badge was later dropped and the helmet bore only the SS rune badge. In some instances the rune badge appeared on the left side. Until about 1940 SS police units were wearing the shield with runes on the right side but with the

BELOW, LEFT: Fez worn by the 13th Division 'Handschar' division. Note also the collar patch detail (Theodor Hartmann). BOTTOM, RIGHT: Sturmmann in camouflaged smock and wearing the early pattern camouflage cap which lacked the side turn ups (IWM-STT5714).

The toque was a head dress worn under the helmet in cold weather. This picture shows two Waffen-SS men (left) and a Luftwaffe paratrooper (right) so attired during the Ardennes offensive, late 1944 (IWM-EA48004).

police badge, ie, the eagle and the wreath on the left. Later this was replaced by the normal national emblem. The head dress was often coated with mud, whitewash, etc, when on campaign in lieu of the normal covers. A variety of straps, elastic bands and wire were utilised on the helmet in battle as they could be readily adapted for the retention of branches and grass, etc. Helmets were also painted in a variety of camouflage colours or covered with a scrim netting or covered with a white Winter cover. In cold weather a toque or a field service cap were worn under the helmet with the flap of the cap, buttoned under the chin, or the toque, pulled well forward over the ears and cheeks and covering the chin. The toque was grey or white. In extreme climatic conditions two toques could be worn at the same time. Facepieces of camouflage net and white cloth were also used, including a special pattern face mask which was attached by a band to the crown of the helmet.

Breeches and Trousers

Earth grey breeches were worn with the first earth grey jackets, but later the normal grey Wehrmacht trousers without any of the green hue seen in the field grey jacket were taken into wear. The field trousers issued for use with jackboots were supplied with tapes at the bottom which could be fastened under the instep of the foot to prevent them riding up inside the boot and the seat was often reinforced with another layer of cloth. Officers' breeches were plain and of the same grey colour. There is a photograph of an SS-Obergruppenführer u. General der Waffen-SS wearing riding breeches with fawn lining and two wide light (white?) stripes with a central thinner one down the outside of each leg. This has not been seen elsewhere (*Ritterkreuz träger der Waffen-SS*). However these stripes may be very light green as the general involved is a Police General.

Boots and Shoes

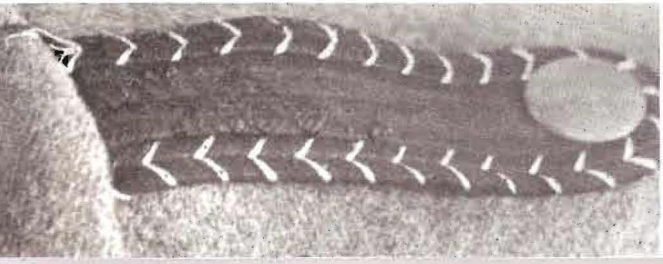
The jackboot (marschstiefel) began to be replaced after 1941 by ankle boots used with leggings or web anklets. These short anklets had two leather straps and buckles. A high, laced, leather service shoe was also issued. Mountain troops were issued with climbing boots heavily cleated and nailed and laced high over the ankle. These troops were also issued with rope or felt soled footwear for climbing. Some mountain units were issued with various patterns of canvas/leather gaiters.

Part 3: Waffenfarben

THE Waffen-SS followed the custom of the Wehrmacht in indicating the arm of service with a variety of coloured pipings on the shoulder straps of NCOs and other ranks, and as cloth underlays to officers' shoulder cords. Peaked caps, field service caps, etc, were also piped for all ranks.

Waffenfarbe	**Arm of Service**	
	(English)	**(German)**
Light grey	General officers and personal staff of RFSS	Führer im Generalstabrang und Persönlicher Stab der RFSS
White	Corp or Divisional HQ Staff and Infantry and Grenadiers	GeneralKommandos der Waffen-SS. Infanterie

Waffenfarbe	Arm of Service (English)	(German)
Golden yellow	Cavalry and Reconnaissance troops	Reitereinheiten Aufklärang Abteilung
Lemon yellow	Signal units, War Correspondents	Nachrichteneinheiten Kriegsberichter der SS
Pink	Tank and Anti-Tank units	Panzereinheiten and Panzerjägereinheiten
Dark blue	Medical units	Sanitätseinheiten
Black	Engineers	Pioniereinheiten
Red	Artillery (including Artillery Schools)	Artillerie und Flakartillerie
Light green	Mountain Rifle Regiments and SS Police (until 1942)	Gebirgsjäger und Schützen Regt der SS-Polizeidivision
Orange	Field Police	Feldgendarmerie
Orange red	Replacement Services (until 1942)	Ergänzungsdienste
Crimson	Veterinary units	Veterinärdienste
Wine red	Rocket Troops and Legal Services	Werfereinheiten Gerichtsdienste
Light pink	Transport and Maintenance Troops	Kraftfahrtechnische Dienst
Light blue	Supply units Admin. and Technical services	Nachschubeneinheiten Versorgungseinheiten Verwaltung und Technische Dienst
Metallic green with black shoulder straps after the Police design	Security Police from 1942	Sicherheitsdienst (SD)
Dark green	Officers of Reserve	Führer der Reserve
Black and white twist	Tank Engineers	Panzer Pioniere
Shell pink	Geologists	Wehrgeologen-Einheiten
Dark blue/green	Special Service NCOs	Sonderdienst
Light brown	Concentration Camp Guards	Konzentrationslager wach sturmbanne
Red and grey	SS Specialists (from 1942)	Fachführer der Waffen-SS



LEFT: Black woven shoulder strap with silver metallic weave. Believed to be field security police.

Part 4: Rank and Unit Insignia

THE SS employed a system of indicating rank that embodied some of the principles of the old 'Freikorps' and 'Stahlhelm' badges, and comprised a combination of oak leaves, stars and bars displayed on the collar patches. For ranks of Standartenführer and above, the rank badges were worn on both the left and right collar patch but junior grades carried the badges on the left collar patch only. All ranks junior to Standartenführer wore the SS runes or the unit emblem on the right collar patch. The 'Totenkopf-division', the 'Totenkopfverbände', 'Wachverbände' and the 'SS-Polizei-division' were exceptions.

The Regiments 'Deutschland', 'Germania' and 'Der Führer' of the SS-VT carried, in addition, an Arabic '1', '2' and '3' respectively after the SS runes on their collar patches plus Gothic initial letters 'D', 'G' and entwined 'DF' on their shoulder straps until 1940 and the shoulder strap devices only until 1944.

Foreign units were identified by a collar patch insignia representing some form of their National Badge or National Emblem. Some elements of the Totenkopfdivision*, the 6th Panzer Grenadier Regiment 'Theodor Eicke', for example, wore the runic SS, but the majority of the divisional troops wore a woven Deathshead emblem as a collar badge.

The SS-Polizeidivision* wore the traditional police lace bars on their collar fronts. These were silver embroidered for officers and grey embroidered for other ranks and were worn on patches of bright green cloth. At a later date the normal SS runic and collar rank badges were taken into use. At one time officers and policemen within one unit appear wearing the two types of insignia at the same time.

Waffen-SS collar patches were black and, at first as SS-VT, edged with a twisted black and white cording. Officers and certain officer cadets had a silvered piping. Later the black and white edging was discarded, but the officers and cadets continued to wear the silvered piping until the end of the war.

SS runes embroidered in silver wire on a grey-green patch were also worn at the base of the left breast pocket by German SS men attached to foreign units probably in lieu of the runic collar patch.

The shoulder straps of the Waffen-SS NCOs followed the Wehrmacht pattern except that they were in black cloth. The wearer's rank was indicated by a system of silver stars combined with a silver (later grey woven) lace. The Oberschütze wore a silver star on a circular black patch, the SS-Sturmann a single chevron and the SS-Rottenführer a double chevron, both on black cloth patches, on the left upper arm under the

* See Notes under Divisional heading.

sleeve eagle. The Stabsscharführer or Hauptscharführer carrying the appointment of Squadron, Battery or Company Sergeant Major, and known in the vernacular as the 'spiess' had the added distinction of two bands of silver lace around each arm above the cuffs.

At first the normal Wehrmacht trade badges were carried on the lower right arm but shortly after the outbreak of war specialists were distinguished by grey badges on a small diamond shaped patch of black cloth indicating their particular trade and worn beneath the rank badges on the left arm.

The illustrations show the complete range of Waffen-SS rank insignia for the period 1942-1945. These varied before that date and the following list completes the record for both periods.

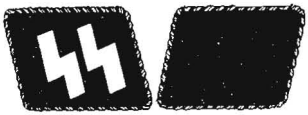
OFFICERS' INSIGNIA BEFORE 1942

Rank	Collar Patch	Shoulder Cords
SS-Obergruppenführer	3 Oak leaves and 1 star	Twisted gold cords with central silver braid and 2 silver stars
SS-Gruppenführer	3 Oak leaves	Ditto with 1 silver star
SS-Brigadeführer	2 Oak leaves and 1 star	Ditto with no stars
SS-Standartenführer	1 Oak leaf	Twisted silver cords with 2 gold stars
SS-Obersturmbann-führer	*1 Bar and 4 stars	Twisted silver cords with 1 gold star
SS-Sturmbannführer	4 Stars	Twisted silver cords
SS-Haupsturmführer	2 Bars and 3 stars	Straight 'Russia braid' cords with 2 silver stars
SS-Obersturmführer	2 Bars and 3 stars	Straight 'Russia braid' cords with 1 silver star
SS-Untersturmführer	3 Stars	Straight 'Russia braid' cords; no stars

* Bars were divided by a central black woven line.

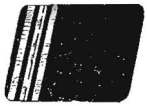
All General Officers grades had a light grey underlay to the shoulder cords but all other commissioned and non-commissioned ranks carried the waffenfarben as an underlay or piping.

With the introduction of the rank of SS-Oberstgruppenführer in April 1942 it became necessary to revise certain of the rank badges. At the same time an opportunity was taken of modifying the design. Henceforth they were to be simpler, narrower and more angular while at the same time a black underlay was introduced and worn under the waffenfarben on the regimental officers' shoulder cords, and silver stars were taken into wear by all ranks.



SS-Mann (until 1940)
SS-Staffelmann (1940-41)
SS-Schütze, Grenadier, Kanonier, Reiter, etc (1941-45).

SS-Sturmmann (worn with a single chevron on left upper arm).



SS-Rottenführer (worn with a double chevron on left upper arm.

SS-Unterscharführer

SS-Scharführer

SS-Oberscharführer

SS-Hauptsturmführer

COLLAR PATCHES

SS-Sturmscharführer

Collar patches for NCOs and other ranks are given above; officers are shown below. Note that the black/silver twisted cord edging to the patches (shown top left—SS-Mann) was discontinued in 1940. Oberschütze wore the same patch as the Schütze but had the 'star' arm badge. Standartenführer and above wore rank insignia in both collar patches. Below this rank the right hand patch displayed the SS runes or the divisional symbol where this replaced the runes.

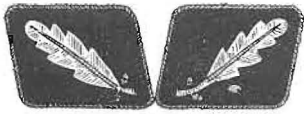
SS-Untersturmführer

SS-Obersturmführer

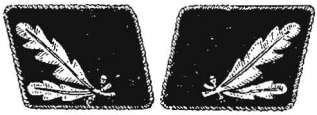
SS-Hauptsturmführer

SS-Sturmbannführer

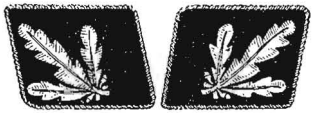
SS-Obersturmbannführer



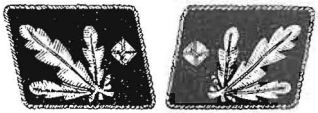
SS-Standartenführer



SS-Oberführer



SS-Brigadeführer



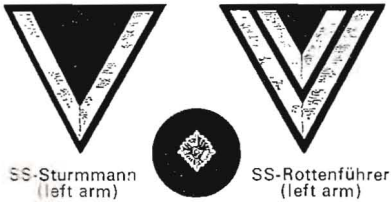
SS-Gruppenführer

SS-Obergruppenführer
(early style up to 1941)

SS-Obergruppenführer
(1942-45)

SS-Oberstgruppenführer
(1942-45)

SHOULDER STRAPS

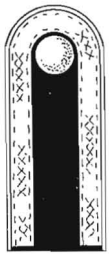


SS-Sturmmann
(left arm)

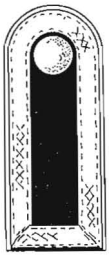
SS-Oberschütze
(left arm)

SS-Rottenführer
(left arm)

SS-Rottenführer
SS-Sturmmann
SS-Schütze



SS-Unter-
scharführer

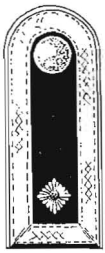


SS-Scharführer

Unterführer
Bewerber

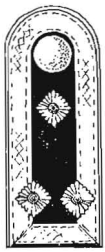
Unterführer
Anwärter

Führer
Bewerber



Ober-
scharführer

Haupt-
scharführer



Sturm-
scharführer

Unter-
sturmführer

Ober-
sturmführer

Haupt-
sturmführer

Sturmbann-
führer

Obersturm-
bannführer

Standarten-
führer

Oberführer

Brigadeführer

Gruppenführer

Obergruppen-führer

Oberst-gruppenführer

Oberschütze badge (left arm)

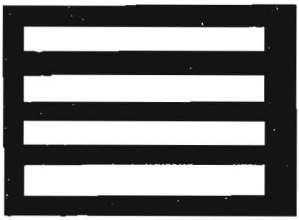
'Pip' detail

Chevron worn by former army and policemen. Introduced in July 1935, the centre 'pip' indicated service in army or police simultaneously with SS service.

Chevron worn on right upper arm by men who were SS or Nazi party members before 1933. Also worn by former police or Wehrmacht men before 1935.

RANK BADGES FOR CAMOUFLAGE CLOTHING

Light green on black background but yellow for Brigadeführer and above.



Hauptscharführer

Scharführer

Unterscharführer

Oberscharführer

führer

führer

führer

führer

führer

Oberstgruppen-
führer
(yellow with
silver stars)

Obergruppen-
führer
(yellow)

Gruppenführer
(yellow)

Brigadeführer
(yellow)

Oberführer

Standerten-
führer

SPECIALIST BADGES

SS-HQ. Replacement, recruitment

Nationality Work Group

SS Economics HQ, Admin.

Judge Advocate (officers)

Doctor/Dentist (officers)

SS Economics HQ, Admin. agriculture

Economic Management

Commissariat for Nationality

Farrier

Medical Orderly

Race and Resettlement HQ.

Press and War Economy Group

Reich Security

All worn on right cuff — white, grey on black background.

Adminstration Staff

Armourer NCO

Security Duty

Veterinary Staff

Technical Officer

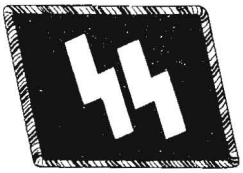
Signaller

Transport NCO

Bandmaster

RIGHT: A typical variation—an SS NCO wearing an army pattern specialist badge (Motor maintenance sergeant or cavalry harness sergeant). The diamond-shape SS pattern badges shown above were worn on the left sleeve. The man is wearing an army pattern tunic but has no collar patches. It was not unusual to see army style(oval) badges also being worn on the left sleeve.

UNIT COLLAR PATCHES WORN BY THE SS-VERFÜGUNGSTRUPPEN (PRE-1940)

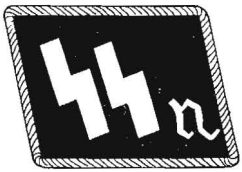


Leibstandarte
SS-'Adolf Hitler'

Standarte
'Deutschland'

Standarte
'Germania'

Standarte
'Der Führer'

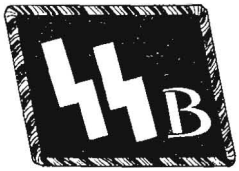


SS-Sturmbann
'Nürnberg'

SS-Nachrichten-
sturmbann (signals)

SS-Pioniersturmbann
(engineers)

SS-Schule 'Tölz'



SS-Schule
'Braunschweig'

SS-Totenkopf Regiment 3

SS-Verwaltungschule

SS-Totenkopf Regiment 2

Note: Black and aluminium cord edging for all ranks up to SS-Stabscharführer. All ranks from SS-Untersturmführer and above had aluminium edging.

EXAMPLES OF RANK INSIGNIA

Obersturmbannführer

Standartenführer

Gruppenführer

Gruppenführer

ABOVE: SS-Gruppenführer in 1940 period wearing the Waffen-SS pattern field grey tunic with the early style of aluminium piping round the lower edge of the collar.

BELOW RIGHT: Waffen-SS pattern field grey service tunic showing the slanted pockets in the skirt. This is a security police tunic and is interesting in having extra buttons similar to the contemporary police tunic. Note the plain collar patches.

BELOW: A Kriegsberichsten (war correspondent) of the L.A.H. in Waffen-SS pattern tunic with the pre-war style of collar patches with black and white twist outlines. Note L.A.H. title on shoulder straps and lemon yellow Waffenfarbe.

CUFF TITLES

A familiar distinction of the Waffen-SS uniform was the ribbon type cuff title or sleeve band carried on the left arm. These were black (except for some Headquarter Staff), edged with an aluminium wire and were embroidered with the title of the division or regiment in grey silk (silver wire for officers). The lettering was in Gothic or Latin script or in the form of an imitation autograph. The earlier 'Totenkopf' cuff title was a small woven death's head but later the full word 'Totenkopf' was introduced. These cuff titles, which were worn with some pride by Waffen-SS troops, were placed 15cm from the bottom edge of the sleeve. There is however evidence that they were, on occasions, worn considerably higher or lower than the prescribed distance. In some cases two cuff titles were worn by the same man. Recorded instances are

Typical cuff title: RFSS was the cuff title of Himmler's staff (Reichsführer der SS).

'SS-Feldgendarmerie' and 'Pioniersturmabteilung' attached to divisions wearing a special title. It is known that in some cases SS officers wore certain campaign titles of Wehrmacht pattern such as 'Afrika', possibly because they had been attached to some Wehrmacht unit at the time it was awarded.

MOUNTAIN GUIDES

Alpine specialist guides, 'Bergführers' were trained at the Gebirgsjäger-Schule der Waffen-SS. They wore the normal Gebirgsjäger uniform and Waffenfarbe with a special edelweiss badge. In winter the tunic and climbing socks and trousers were worn and in summer shirt sleeve order with short 'pumphosen'. The rank was carried on the collar patch, shoulder strap or, when the anorak was worn, the special arm badge (see under camouflaged clothing) was carried on the left upper arm. The special Bergführer badge was an oval 55mm high and 43mm wide of black cloth with a 2mm broad aluminium cord edge, in the centre a silvered aluminium edelweiss 33mm high (42 with stalk). The flower had gold stamen and had 'BERGFÜHRER' in silvered aluminium in a half circle beneath it. The badge was worn on the left breast pocket.

INSIGNIA OF THE FOREIGN LEGIONS

Foreign nationals in the Waffen-SS wore armshields to denote their country of origin. These shields were different from the national armshields issued to foreign nationals serving in the Wehrmacht (the Waffen-SS shields were 'heater' shaped with straight tops, the Wehrmacht shield more baroque in style with scalloped tops and belled sides). The

SS shields were worn on the left sleeve. Until 1944 they were carried 1·5cm above the cuff title and from that year were ordered to be worn 1·5cm below the sleeve eagle and above the rank chevron or star. Needless to say these regulations were not always followed.

Variations in the design of these badges appear. In some cases even within the same unit and in some instances they appear as small replicas of the national flag. Photographs also exist of Wehrmacht personnel wearing their style national armshields on the left arm even though it was ordered to be worn on the right arm in their case and even Waffen-SS wearing the Wehrmacht pattern shield.

DENMARK

Freikorps Danmark:

Collar patch: As Schalburg Korps a circular swastika, later SS runes were taken into use or the sun wheel.

Armshield: Danish Flag. As Schalburg Korps, a yellow shield with three blue rampant lions and red hearts was worn.

Cuff title: FREIKORPS DANMARK.
DANMARK.

BELGIUM

Legion Flandern:

Collar patch: SS runes or a curved swastika.

Armshield: A golden yellow shield with a black rampant lion with a knotted or a single tail.

Cuff title: LEGION FLANDERN.

Legion Wallonie:

Collar patch: SS runes or a badge consisting of the 'Ragged Cross of Burgundy' but this latter is not confirmed.

Armshield: Vertical black, yellow and scarlet bands, black rectangular panel above lettered 'Wallonie' in yellow capitals.

Cuff title: WALLONIEN or WALLONIE.

HOLLAND

Legion Niederlande:

Collar patch: 'Wolfsangel' rune worn either vertical or horizontal.

Armshield: Orange, white and blue diagonal bands. (Alternative version with horizontal bands.)

Cuff title: FRW. LEGION NEDERLANDE (see below).
(For ceremonial occasions an orange, white and blue transfer was worn on the left side of the helmet—but not on campaign.)

NORWAY

Legion Norwegen:

Collar patch: Rampant lion carrying an axe.

Armshield:
(1) A Norwegian flag either as a shield or as a rectangle.
(2) A Norwegian lion carrying an axe.
(3) A round black badge with a silver grey cross and two swords. (The 'Hird' emblem but in black not red as in the original.)

Cuff title: FRW. LEGION NORWEGEN.

BELOW: A Sturmbannführer of 'Legion Norwegen' wearing a Bergmutze (mountain cap) the distinctive 'Legion Norwegen' collar patch, cuff title, and national emblem (3rd type above) on left sleeve.

FINLAND

Finnisches Freiwilligen Battaillon:

Collar patch: SS runes.

Armshield: Black, white edged, rectangular shield with white Finnish crowned lion with a mailed front leg carrying a sword over its shoulder and standing on a curved Russian sword.

Cuff title: FINNISCHES FRW. BATTAILLON
DER WAFFEN SS.

ESTONIA

Estnisches Legion:

Collar patch: SS runes or double swastika (see illustration, page 30).

Armshield: Horizontal bands pale blue, black and white. (Alternative version with three blue lions on a golden yellow shield.)

Cuff title: None.

LATVIA

Lettisches Legion:

Collar patch: SS runes or single upright swastika.

Armshield: A maroon red shield with a white central diagonal stripe and the word LATVJIA in the top half (several alternative versions).

Cuff title: None.

When first formed it should be noted that many of these Baltic Legions continued to wear their own national uniform with its attendant badges. In some cases troops with German and the Baltic country uniform appear side by side on parade.

FRANCE

Franzosisches Freiwilligen Legion (later Sturm Brigade 'Charlemagne'):

Collar patch: 'Flaming Sword' or SS runes—the former unconfirmed.

Armshield: French tricolour.

Cuff title: CHARLEMAGNE.

ITALY

Italienisches Freiwilligen Legion (later Freiwilligen Brigade der SS 'Italien'):

Collar patch: The Roman fasces is alleged to have been worn but photographs show the SS runes.

Armshield: Black with yellow thread 'fasces' picked out in red and with a thin yellow border.

Cuff title: None.

Note that as a Brigade the Italians had red collar patches as a distinction and a special Italian sleeve eagle gripping a 'fasces' in its talons all on a red cloth patch. As a Brigade formation they wore Italian uniforms and Italian helmets.

RANK TITLES

The Waffen-SS used a system of rank titles which differed from those of the German Army. The titles appear to have been derived, in part at least, from the Romanised rank titles of the old Freikorps and the Stahlhelm.

COMPARISON OF WAFFEN-SS RANKS WITH BRITISH ARMY RANKS

BRITISH RANK	(nearest equivalent)	WAFFEN-SS
Field Marshal		SS Oberstgruppenführer und General Oberst der Waffen-SS
General		SS Obergruppenführer und General der Waffen-SS
Lieutenant-General		SS Gruppenführer und Generalleutnant der Waffen-SS
Major-General		SS Brigadeführer und Generalmajor der Waffen-SS
Brigadier		SS Oberführer
Colonel		SS Standartenführer
Lieutenant-Colonel		SS Obersturmbannführer
Major		SS Sturmbannführer
Captain		SS Hauptsturmführer
Lieutenant		SS Obersturmführer
2nd Lieutenant		SS Untersturmführer
Regimental Sergeant Major		SS Stabsscharführer
Company Sergeant Major		SS Sturmscharführer
Company Sergeant Major		SS Standarten-Oberjunker
Staff Sergeant		SS Hauptscharführer
Sergeant		SS Oberscharführer
Sergeant		SS Standartenjunker
Lance Sergeant		SS Scharführer
Corporal		SS Unterscharführer
Corporal		SS-Junker
Lance Corporal		SS Rottenführer
Lance Corporal	*	SS Oberschütz
Private, Rifleman,		SS Sturmmann
Trooper, etc.		SS Schütze, Jäger, Reiter, etc.
		SS Mann or SS-Staffelmann
Recruit		SS Anwarter

SPECIALIST PERSONNEL

In 1942 special diamond shaped sleeve badges and a special two colour waffenfarbe was introduced for the Fachführer der Waffen-SS. These personnel were specialist officers and NCOs who roughly corresponded with the Specialists ('Sonderführer') of the Wehrmacht. The sleeve

* The Waffen-SS used the rank SS Oberschütze (and its badge) from 1940 and at approximately the same time the old title 'SS-Mann' was changed to 'SS-Staffetmann'. In 1941 the Wehrmacht titles for the various arms such as 'SS-Obergrenadier' or 'SS-Oberjäger' were introduced.

diamonds were in white/grey thread embroidered on black cloth and were worn on the left cuff. The waffenfarbe consisted of a two colour twisted cord in the proportion of two red 'twists' to every six grey 'twists' and was worn by officers and NCOs. Officers and NCOs below the rank of Standartenführer are likely to have worn plain black, right hand, collar patches similar to SD personnel.

Specialist badges are all illustrated on page 98 in the uniform insignia section.

DIVISIONAL SIGNS

The first use of unit marking on vehicles of the Waffen-SS appears to have occurred during the occupation of Austria in 1938. The photograph of the Austrian armoured car clearly shows the 'Totenkopf' plus the SS runes. However, the first official use of such markings was at the commencement of World War II when the Waffen-SS (VT) was ordered by the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht to display symbols on unit vehicles so as to fall in line with the army.

Divisional signs were displayed both at the front and the rear of the vehicles and were stencilled on the ground colour of the bodywork, mainly in white or yellow paint, although deviations from these colours are known. The signs appeared with, or without, the surrounding shield outline. A number of divisions had variations of the signs which can be found in photographs of various dates, where possible these have been noted. Many of the units in the later stages of the war, and where vehicles were in short supply, were authorised to carry unit symbols on their transport but omitted to do so although the identifying badge can be seen on signposting.

The signs generally had some heraldic significance—the most well known being the 'key' symbol used by SS units in honour of SS-Oberst-

A very early example of the application of a formation sign to an SS vehicle. This ADGZ armoured car is shown during the occupation of Austria. The sign is thought to be unofficial. Authorised heraldic signs appeared in 1940 and are shown in part 1 of this book (IWM-GER1210).

gruppenführer Josef 'Sepp' Dietrich, his name being German for Picklock or Skeleton Key. It has also been stated that the wreath introduced for the I SS-Panzer Korps coincided with Dietrich's award of oak leaves to his Knight's Cross.

PERSONAL FIELD EQUIPMENT

Equipment carried by personnel of the Waffen-SS was mainly standard army issue, although they were responsible for trying out a number of new innovations regarding equipment.

Besides the black leather waistbelt, rank and file carried two M1909 pattern cartridge pouches, one either side of the buckle. Each pouch was divided into three, each section holding ten rounds in clips. The waistbelt passed through loops at the rear of each pouch, and the centre pouch was fitted with a 'D' ring on to which the equipment braces, when worn, could be hooked. Also suspended from the waistbelt were the entrenching tool, carried from a leather frog on the left side. At the beginning of the war the bayonet was worn over the entrenching tool, and retained by a leather loop on the entrenching tool frog; later the bayonet was worn just in front of it in a leather frog. The M1934 pattern haversack (Brotbeutel) of brown canvas hung from two loops at the rear of the right hip, and held toilet requisites, field cap, eating utensils, rations and other small personal items. Carried from a 'D' ring on the haversack, and retained by a strap passing through a loop on the haversack flap, was the aluminium water bottle M1931. An oval, or round, cup was secured over the top.

The gasmask and container was carried over the right shoulder by a web strap attached to the top of the container, while the bottom hooked on to the belt at the rear.

Leather braces (two sets were issued one without the 'D' rings and used for ceremonials and parade occasions) were worn to support the carrying of more equipment, and a light metal, web covered, yoke could be fitted on to the rear of the braces from which could be carried the normal assault pack (light field order), and also the full marching order pack, consisting of the combat pack M1939 (which was normally carried in the baggage with the transport), clothing bag, tent quarter (zeltbahn), tent quarter pegs, greatcoat and blanket. The tent quarter, greatcoat and blanket were normally carried in a 'horseshoe' around the pack. The tent quarter, a very ingenious piece of German equipment, made of camouflaged (SS patterns) water repellent material, also doubled as a poncho cape in wet weather. This was cut in an elongated triangle with a slit in the material through which the head passed. The corners of the base of the triangle at the rear, was brought forward and tied at the front. The wearer's arms passed through the openings left at the sides, the surplus material acting as 'half-sleeves'. This 'sleeve' material was often rolled up and turned in at the shoulder to leave the arms free but the 'zeltbahn' could be used in a variety of other ways.

Metal fittings of all leather equipment were in gun metal.

An earlier type of combat pack M1934 was concurrently in use, this was designed to carry all the soldier's equipment without the clothing bag.

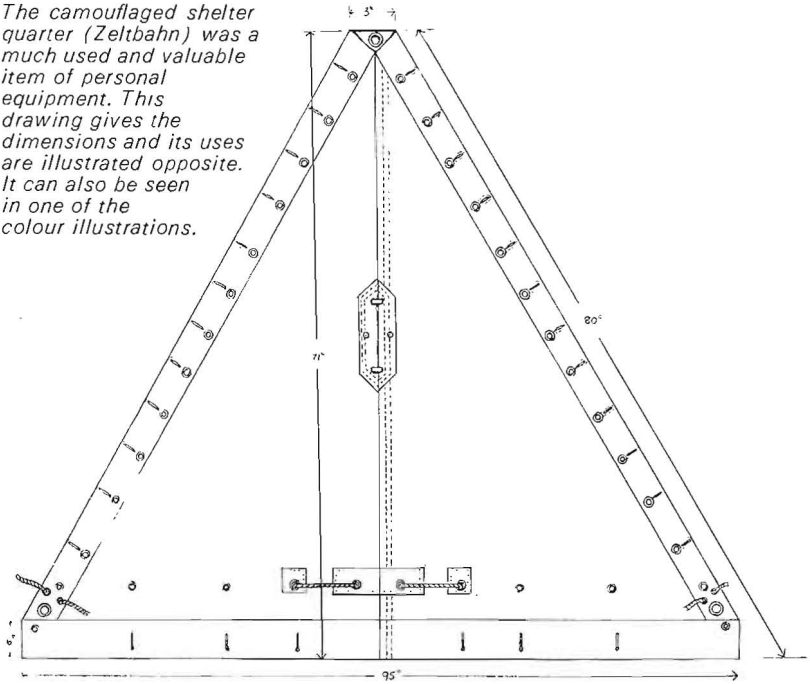
Engineers and mountain troops carried packs of a different pattern.

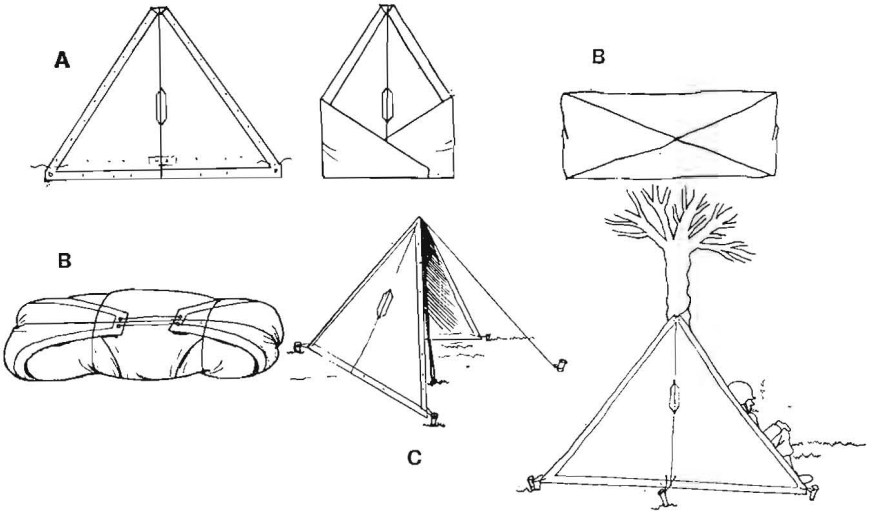
Apart from the M98 and M43 pattern rifle, and the P08 (Luger) and P38 pistols, carried by NCOs and officers, the other small arms weapon mainly in use, again by officers and NCOs, was the M38 and M40 pattern machine pistol, or sub-machine gun (commonly known as the Schmeisser). When this latter weapon was carried, one or two magazine pouches were carried. Again these were divided into three sections, each section holding two magazines. In the early days these were made of leather, but later were made of web, or even canvas. The pouch was attached to the belt by leather loops stitched at an angle. Being attached diagonally facilitated the easy withdrawal of the 9 inch long magazines. Pistols were carried in black leather holsters.

Rear view of standard infantry equipment less the pack. This shows the yoke for the assault pack, 'D' rings, and buckles for the fastening of the back, cape and water-bottle. Note the maker's name and date stencilled on the yoke.

Rear views above show (left to right) parade braces without 'D' rings; fighting order (including shelter quarter); and marching order with and without large pack. RIGHT: The alternative magazine holders issued to NCOs and other troops equipped with Schmeisser machine pistols (MP38 and MP40).

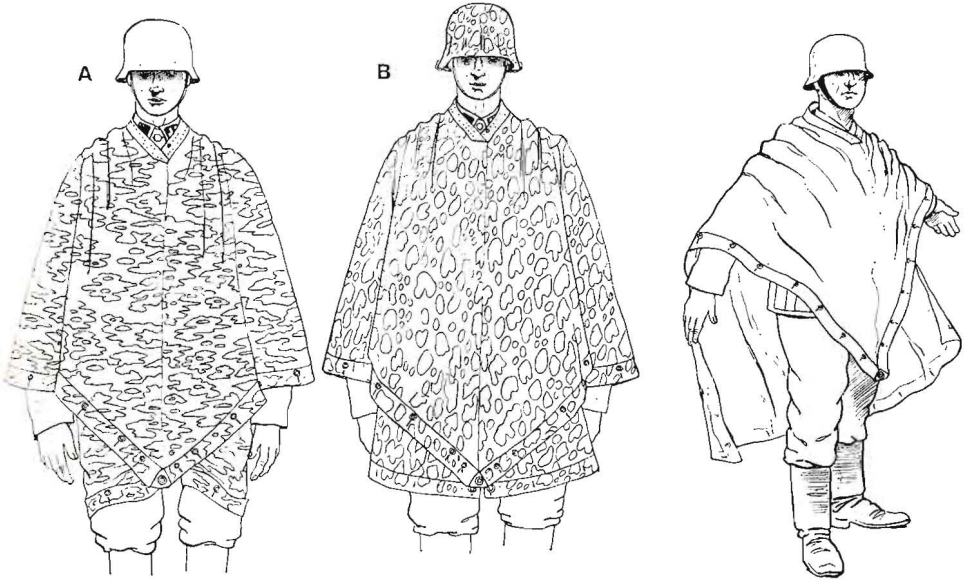
The camouflaged shelter quarter (Zeltbahn) was a much used and valuable item of personal equipment. This drawing gives the dimensions and its uses are illustrated opposite. It can also be seen in one of the colour illustrations.



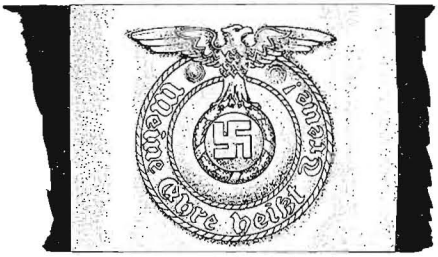


ABOVE: (A) The method of folding the tent quarter. (B) Two quarters folded and used as a float when crossing rivers, etc. (C) Two methods of using one or two quarters as wind breaks. Two quarters could also be used as a stretcher, and one quarter could be used as a sling to carry a wounded person on the back.

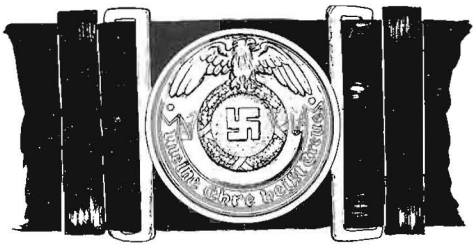
BELOW: Two methods are shown for wearing the tent quarter as a poncho. (A) for infantry and other dismounted personnel and (B) for cavalry and cyclists. On shorter men the tent quarter came down well over the knees, when worn loose by infantry. Buttoning the poncho up between the legs tended to make it look shorter.



MISCELLANEOUS INSIGNIA



Other ranks' belt buckle.



Officers' belt buckle.

ABOVE, LEFT: Standard bearer's Gorget. This was in polished steel with golden eagle and studs.
ABOVE, RIGHT: The Feldgendarmerie gorget (ringkragen) had the two bosses, with the eagle and the lettering on the black scroll painted in luminous paint. Field police also wore the special orange embroidered eagle and oak leaf sleeve badge and a brown cuff title lettered 'SS-Feldgendarmerie' in block grey embroidery. In some photographs SS-Feldgendarmerie wear the army pattern cuff title lettered 'Feldgendarmerie' in Gothic letters and the normal SS sleeve eagle. If the unit had a cuff title this was worn also.
RIGHT: The Feldgendarmerie sleeve badge was orange on a grey background.

LEFT: The Waffen-SS brassard was worn by civilian personnel employed by the Waffen-SS.

Waffen = SS by D. S. V. Fosten and R. J. Marrion

A profusely illustrated record of the SS-VT and Waffen-SS over the years 1938-1945, covering history, organisation, units, uniforms, insignia and equipment; with 16 colour plates, 80 pictures, and scores of fine line drawings.

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